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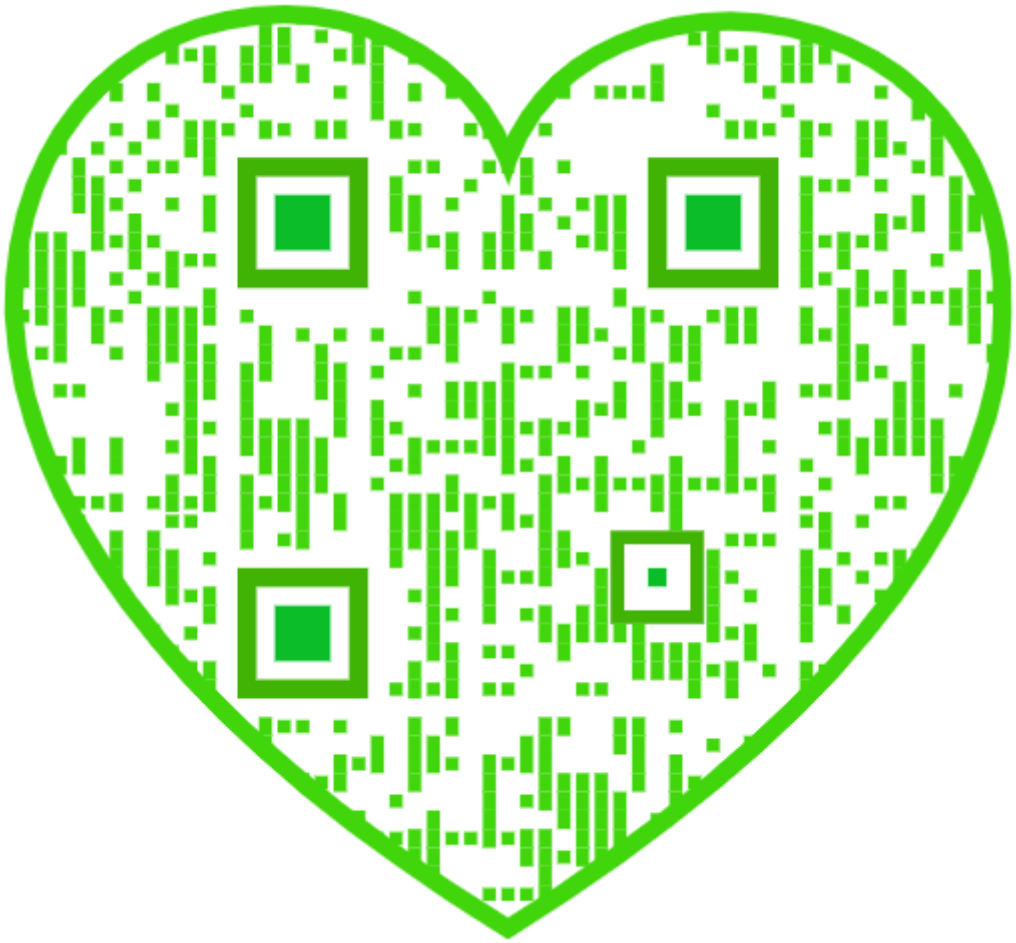

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FROM HOLBEIN TO WHISTLER

PUBLISHED ON THE FOUNDATION
ESTABLISHED IN MEMORY OF
HERBERT A. SCHEFTEL
OF THE CLASS OF 1898, YALE COLLEGE.

FROM
HOLBEIN TO WHISTLER
NOTES ON
DRAWING AND ENGRAVING

BY

ALFRED MANSFIELD BROOKS

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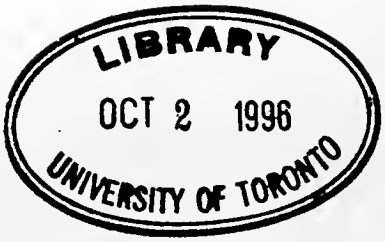

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TO

EVANS WOOLLEN

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INTRODUCTION

ALL judgment passed on pictures must come from one or the other of two sources; from artists, the producing class, or from those who look at pictures for pleasure, for instruction, or for both. The former are few by comparison with the latter. Of them, artists, only a very small fraction ever writes about the virtues and shortcomings of pictures or, in common parlance, gives itself to criticism. This is left to another few who form a party by themselves. In a measure, sometimes a surprising measure, this class controls the picture market, past, as well as present. Occasionally they make both reputation and fortune for a new, or young artist, but in more instances they are a millstone about the artistic neck. They seek to instruct and to direct the great class of picture buyers, and lovers of pictures, whether owners or not. They may suddenly bring into fashion the works of men long forgotten, in most cases justly so, but, now and then, unjustly. These persons, critics, are of the passing sort, those who seek to write entertainingly for the papers and art periodicals, or they are of the permanent sort, those who seek, philosophically, to discover the principles and fundamentals of great art, and to expound those qualities which make pictures good or bad, no matter when done, or where, or by whom. This is not to say that the former are necessarily poor or the latter necessarily good, although the chances lie this way, because many of the former are little more than reporters and hackwriters, while most of the latter are, at least, specially trained in, and devoted for life to, the profession of criticism. But this in turn may mean nothing more than ponderous dullness and general unintelligibility; in other words, that uninspired accuracy of the sort typified by so much of the work of the modern German purveyors of fact unredeemed by imagination, that *sine qua non* alike of the production and the understanding of pictures. At

best, art critics are like book reviewers. They do some good and a great deal of harm. Finally, however, a really great picture, like a great book, acquires a recognized existence of its own and becomes quite independent of all critics, alike of those who blame and those who praise. When this occurs the picture in question, like the really great book, has its life in the affections of men generally, and its immortality, together with that of its maker, becomes assured. That Wordsworth was ridiculed, Thackeray condemned, and Turner laughed at has long since ceased to signify anything more than that their critics were mistaken. "The Prelude," "Henry Esmond," and the "Téméraire" are already elected to "The Immortals" by the only vote which counts permanently in such elections, the vote of intelligent men scattered over a long period of time.

This book deals only with pictures of great and unquestioned merit. It seeks neither to make nor to mar the reputation of any artist. And no more does it concern itself with market values. It deals primarily with the art of engraving in one or other of its better-known forms, together with the art of drawing which, as it is the foundation of all good picture making, is the foundation of all good engraving. To point out some of the salient requisites of good drawing, and to illustrate these requisites as they appear in a limited number of the works of the best and most famous engravers the world has produced, is the second, but in no sense secondary, aim of this book. For the doing of these things understandingly it will be necessary to deal with differences of medium, tools, and methods employed by the artist-draughtsman, as such, and this same artist-draughtsman turned engraver. In fine, it is a book on drawing and engraving intended to help the already large and yearly increasing number of those who are interested in these two arts,—drawing, perhaps the subtlest as well as loveliest, and engraving, probably the most difficult in point of technique, as well as loveliest, of all the forms of pictorial representation known to man in his capacity of artist. The help intended is offered in the form of useful and basic facts, together with some consideration of important principles and theories, relating to the twin arts treated of, and the specific examples of each of these arts considered. It is help intended to make the judgment of the intelligent layman, the amateur enthusiast, more certain, and to afford him some of the materials necessary to an upbuilding of the sort of critical art-faculty that shall count, to him personally, for better understanding, hence truer appreciation, of the things which he

sincerely loves. In a word, enable him to give himself reasons for the faith which is in him regarding great and famous pictures produced by men whose only tools were pencil, pen, graver, or etching needle.

Of making pictures, like making books, there is no end. Of both, the real value exists in the power of appeal to, and in the amount of influence upon, the people who look at them, and read them. They remain what they have been time out of mind, the two chief conveyancers of the thoughts of men within single generations, and likewise from one generation to another. It is needless to argue their importance. Primarily both are matters of description and, in no remote or abstruse manner, this description amounts to imitation; the making of such combinations of words or marks on paper as shall, upon looking at them, conjure up visions of reality, known or unknown, in the sense of actually experienced, in the mind of the reader or looker. They both alike involve a double question of truth; truth to actual fact, fact such as the reporter and the camera record, and truth to the significance of this same fact in the mind of the artist who recorded it, a further sort of truth which only the man of reason and imagination can perceive, and only the artist who is a master of his tools and medium can record. The point is that every good picture and every good book tells us what its maker saw and knew, plus something of what he thought *about* what he saw and knew, and what he wants other men—those who read his book or look at his picture—to think along with him. As he has it in him to commune deeply with his subject, whatever it may be, and has found that subject inspiring, illuminating, delightful, one or all of these, so he wishes other men to commune in similar fashion, through him, vicariously as it were, with similar result. What the artist-draughtsman, artist-writer, really does is to create a magic triangle whereof he places himself at one angle, the treatment of his subject, his work, at another, and the human being who is to benefit by sharing in that work at the third; this done, to establish bonds of common understanding or sympathy between each pair of adjacent angles. In different words, the true artist always seeks to make those who come near to him, through his work, happier, wiser, better, as the case may be, by coming into more intimate acquaintance with a subject with which they already are acquainted, or into acquaintance with a subject of which they previously had known nothing at all. The end of all great art is not only praise, as Ruskin said, but increase of understanding and sympathy among men, both of and for

human nature, man; of and with that beautiful and wonderful nature which we call 'inanimate' and the numberless living things, other than man, which it supports. In the final reaction, art and truth, whether the art of pictures or of books, are one, in degree as either approaches to greatness. With each the highest attainable end has been reached when the words or marks—precious in exact proportion as they convey to others an accurate sense of reality, beauty, significance, as these existed in the vivid mindedness of their author—become faithful conveyancers of truth. Locke, in his essay on the "Human Understanding," says, in speaking of the abuse of words, what is equally true of the lines which make up a drawing, "The first and most palpable abuse is the using of words without clear and distinct ideas; or, which is worse, signs without anything signified." In drawing, the lines, every touch, are signs. All great art implies three things; an understanding of one's self, i.e., the artist; of one's matter, i.e., the artist's subject; of those for whom the artist voluntarily assumes the glad pains of the labor of actually drawing the picture or writing the book, i.e., readers, or the people who look at pictures.

One thing is certain in regard to each, maker of books or pictures, the value and imperative need of originality. Beware of it. Nothing is rarer or more precious. Neither is any quality more counterfeited. As no attribute can lift an artist higher, or seat him more securely among men of enduring reputation, so none can cast him lower or consign him to such deep oblivion as pseudo-originality. Originality in art is evidence of man's power to discover hitherto unseen, or wholly forgotten, meanings and facts, in life and nature; this, together with the power to have fresh thoughts about such meanings and facts as have long been commonly recognized. This power is the world's sole defense against boredom. To be truly original is to see and think new things about old subjects, sanely. This is genius. It means continuing the freshness and the joy of youth on into the years of manhood and age; on into the years when the mysteries of technical expression have all been fathomed, and the hand has gained all the cunning which long and wise practice can bestow upon it. Such freshness and joy, in the matter of landscape, as Wordsworth's "Youth" had when,

> "he beheld the sun
> Rise up, and bathe the world in light!
> He looked—
> Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth

And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay
Beneath him:—Far and wide the clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces could be read
Unutterable love. . . .
. . . his spirit drank
The spectacle; sensation, soul and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live; they were his life."

Such fresh keenness of pereeption, in the matter of human portraiture as is described in "Lancelot and Elaine":

"As when a painter, poring on a face
Divinely through all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and color of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best
And fullest."

Nothing, as all know, is rarer than that genius whieh is always evidenced, in part, by the strange and beautiful simplicity of seeing, which looks straight into the hearts of men; the simplicity whieh is preëminently eharacteristie of a ehild; and, in part, by that simplicity of utterance, in line or word, which cleaves close up to the essential structure of the forms and facts to be described or depicted, ruthlessly cutting away all that is adventitious, no matter how lovely or how interesting in itself. Rarely has this strange and beautiful simplicity of seeing, it is the simplicity of childhood earried over into manhood and age, been better explained in words than when William de Morgan wrote about Ghirlandajo's Louvre portrait (Fig. 1) of the old man whose nose is so disfigured by disease, and the pretty ehild who is so oblivious of the defect, and so sure of "the man behind it." And never did a painter, a man in the full flush of years, cleave closer to the essentials of his subject, or more ruthlessly forego every adventitious detail.

"I am sure these babies see straight through wrinkles and decay and toothless gums to the burning soul the old shell imprisons, and love it. Do you recollect that picture in the Louvre—the old man with the sweet face and the appalling excreseence on the nose and the little boy's unflinching love as he looks up to him?" The pressure of this child's hand, and

the lift of this child's eye are of the proofs which transcend all doubt. The limpid clearness of the landscape seen through the window by which sit these two who are one, is a fit symbol of this child's crystalline understanding, and not less of Ghirlandajo's.

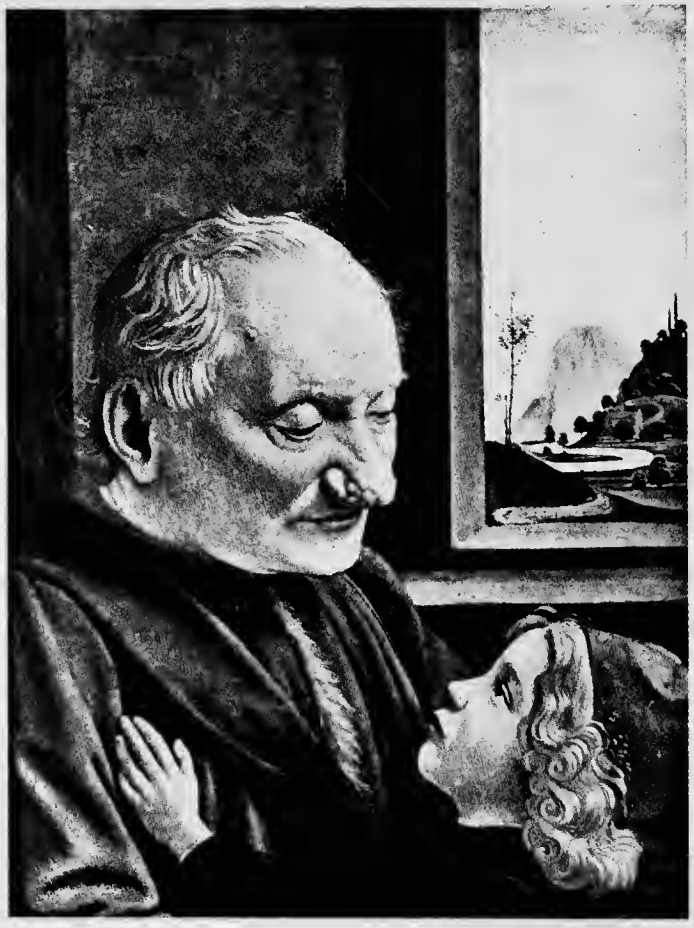


Fig. 1. Old Man and Child. Ghirlandajo.

"How can I be original?" "Is it original?"

These questions are insistently and incessantly asked in the constantly self-searched heart of the artist, and the not less self-searched hearts of those who seek the benefits and pleasures of art, laymen, cultivated and uncultivated.

Introduction

"Is there anything new to say?" "Has this or that particular picture anything new to tell?"

Could any one be found who has, as artist or lover of art, given these questions a single hour's thought, who would deny their fate-like importance? He who plays at originality is the one who loses. To pretend to genius is the consummate mockery that a man can lay upon himself. It is a disease which attacks the distinctly talented and the very stupid, passing over that great middle class whom saving common sense protects. It is the blight of many a fairly good artist and of hundreds of would-be connoisseurs. It may be conscious or unconscious pretense. That does not matter. The fire burns though we know not that it is hot.

There is a remark bearing directly, and with complete illumination, upon this matter of originality, which may appear to have been treated in a somewhat vague and mysterious manner. But it must be remembered that the subject is not a definite one, admitting of definite treatment in the same sense, and with such certain results, as when we add three to four and get seven. Sir Joshua Reynolds, painter of the best of portraits, because, in drawing a face, he revealed the temper of the soul of his sitter, a thing which no camera, with all its accuracy, can do, was the author of one of the most valuable books ever written about art. This book is doubly precious because it is made up of the opinions of a very eminent artist whom the world recognizes as a highly successful man, upon the theory and purpose of art, as well as the practice. Sir Joshua tells us that "the best road to originality is through what has been done." This means, knowing the past; possessing ourselves of such knowledge as can alone be got from a thoughtful and discriminating study of the works of the past. The fruit of such knowledge is the establishing of a bond of sympathy between us, the producers and consumers of the present, artist and lover of art, and what has been done before our day. Such knowledge is the only sure foundation on which to build a sane criticism of art, and the sole trustworthy pledge for its further upbuilding in the future. It is the very body of originality; first and best aid that the ordinary man can give to genius which, Dante said, is "inpoured of heaven at birth and can be had through no human willing." In fine, it means a company of intelligent, trained appreciators. To neglect it is criminal.

This applies to all those who make up, so to speak, the great lay class, as well as painters and artists. As artists, students in the sense of amateur

practitioners of art, or appreciators solely, we should rid ourselves of the notion that because a work of art is being loudly acclaimed it is of necessity, or even probably, original. Look sooner at the work which somebody who has the right of judgment, one who has given the work of his own day full consideration, as well as much heed to what the past thought about the subject as well as produced, regards as sound and fine. This is not saying that we should alone study the past and despise the present. It is saying only this, and emphatically, that we ought to avail ourselves of all the help we can command; that help lies in the past as well as in the present, perhaps more.

Listen again to Sir Joshua. "Invention is one of the great marks of genius; but if we consult experience, we shall find, that it is by being conversant with the experience of others, that we learn to invent; as by reading the thoughts of others we learn to think." Genius and originality are will-o'-the-wisps. If we refuse to look and to prepare until they come our way we are pretty sure to have grown blind by the time they pass and so be little the better for their passing. Shakespeare's "Reputation" is a thing "oft got without merit," sounds a precious and a fearful warning. The breath of popular applause often sullies what it advertises. Like its sister breath of condemnation, it rarely has much to do with fixing ultimate values in the field of art. At the present moment there are hundreds of people, artists among them, who believe work to be original simply because they do not know that the past produced the same thing, perhaps more than once, not to add, did it better. The would-be social reformer discovering late in life that Plato had "hit upon" some of her ideas offers an amusing illustration to the point. Such persons, in relation to art, it matters not at all whether they call themselves laymen, practitioners, or critics, are uneducated. To be so is not a greater disgrace in this connection than in any other: neither is it less of a misfortune.

Dissemination of knowledge about pictures, drawn or engraved, can accomplish much in the way of elevating taste, even excellent taste, to the far more desirable level of culture. No one has made the distinction between these two more clearly than Pater. It is so complete as to amount to a definition of each. "What is meant by taste is an imperfect intellectual state; it is but a sterile kind of culture. It is the mental attitude, the intellectual manner of perfect culture, assumed by a happy instinct. Its beautiful way of handling everything that appeals to the senses and the

intellect is really directed by the laws of the higher intellectual life, but while culture is able to trace those laws mere taste is unaware of them." This is another way of saying that one man can and another cannot give reasons for the faith which is in him. There is no room for argument as to what the world has always thought about the relative merits, intellectually speaking, of two such men. There can be no doubt also as to the satisfaction to oneself of being able to *tell why*, or as to the good which one may be able to do others by fitting himself to *tell why*. The point is that the good estate of art depends upon practitioner and appreciator, on layman and producer, on artist and consumer. The more each enters into and truly understands the other's point of view, and the more both know about what has been done in the past, the better it will be for art and the understanding of art in the present.

It is comparatively easy to distinguish between the work of talent and stupidity, the good and the bad. It is a very different matter to distinguish between good work and that which is downright excellent; the emanation of genius. To do this requires accurate powers of discrimination; firm and abiding fairness; a thoughtful bent of mind; imagination; and all the information that can possibly be had. The result is true appreciation, another name for profound understanding. It always implies sympathy. In such degree as an individual has it is he cultivated. Appreciation of art is the product of powerfully trained reason joined to an unusual capacity for feeling. Sentiment is at the core of it. Sentimentality is pole-distant from it. There are two main avenues of approach to it. One lies along the way of Sir Joshua's advice; it would be easy to name many famous men who have acted upon the principles underlying his advice,—learn how the past brought reason and imagination to bear upon the materials of art. Man and nature, be it remembered, are those materials. The other avenue is that of today, here, and tomorrow,—the living present and the future. All great art is vivid and has been always. It is the record of a mind and heart keenly alive to the environment of their own time. All great art clothes the fondest memory and the intensest reality with the garb of immediacy. Hills of Judea, or features of Christ, as well as every common sight, when conjured into the presence of memory, in degree of their vividness take on the semblance of what we know best and best comprehend in our own everyday existence and environment. Too many of us forget, or never really grasp the fact, that all men are potentially artists; that

the Raphaels and the Rembrandts, the Leonardos and the Turners, have made pictures for us all, in the same sense that the Shakespeares and the Wordsworths have spoken for us all. To be a people's or an age's mouthpiece, is to be a great artist.

> "True wit is nature to advantage dress'd;
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd,"

might properly, for our present purpose, be changed to have "wit" read "art." But we should never forget that these, and all of their ilk, have dealt invariably with those eternal commonplaces which make up the life of man and the life of nature without regard to time or place. They do precisely what Sir Walter Scott said a gentleman asks of literature, namely, "that it shall arouse him from his habitual contempt for what goes on about him." In other words, it is the splendid mission of the real artist to make us acquainted with the people whom we constantly meet in our daily round of life; to make us acquainted with the surroundings of our everyday existence; and, in doing so, to make us rightly value the wonder and the beauty of God's creation, animate and inanimate, and through such valuing realize the significance of what is infinitely more wonderful and more beautiful than we ourselves may ever have the happy fortune to learn through any experience of our own. This way only leads to a comprehension of, hence a sharing in, those works of art which represent man at his best, which is the same as saying his closest approach to the ideal. To be able to share thus is the very essence of culture. Its end is reverence, delight, and peace.

To make plain how engraving, in its many forms, is but a kind of drawing, and how drawing, as such, is one of the noblest of all the arts, and one, as such, not understood and, much less, valued at a tithe of its real worth even by the majority of persons who pretend to an interest in art, and not regarded or understood at all by most persons, is really the purpose of the following pages. To do these things it will be necessary to explain, with more or less detail, some of the technicalities upon which rest the respective life of drawing and engraving. Further, it will be necessary to touch frequently upon matters of history in connection with them. In other words, to speak of how, and when, and where, and why, they came into being. But it is not the purpose of this book to relate the history of engraving. That has been done in many languages, and well done many times. And less is it intended as a treatise on the processes of

engraving. Less still will it be found to add fresh facts to the great stores of knowledge already gathered in such connection. It is to be hoped that this book may lead interested persons, trained or untrained in drawing, to turn their attention to it, together with the splendid and closely related art of engraving in its manifold forms of strength and beauty. It is hoped to bring this about through an introduction to the never-ending sources of delight and the unending help which may be found in the enormous number of easily accessible examples of these essentially identical arts. Such an introduction must, of necessity, deal with the question of values, technical as well as spiritual, and with specific illustration of such values, but will not deal with a burdensome and confusing number of actual works of art, either drawings or engravings. For this reason a comparatively small number of famous instances of the engraver's art, each one in itself a notable example of drawing, will be discussed, while the greater part of the book will be taken up with a consideration of the fundamental principles governing the practice of these arts, the range of ideas possible to them, and their particular places in the world of art generally. Further, the reader's attention will be called to certain of the manifold ways by which the engraver and his art, or the engraver and his trade, have had a hand, often leading hand, in the concerns of religion and the spread of knowledge, not to mention increasing the material and durable satisfactions and delights of civilized and cultivated men. Engraving that has given the world so many of its best pictures also gave it the art of printing, its chief vehicle for the spread of information and wisdom, for as drawing was mother of engraving, so engraving was mother of printing. At the present moment, in one or other of its many forms, it is made use of to expound the printed page, be its subject poetry, mechanics, medicine, or any one of a hundred other matters. Again, we find it serving the ends of joy, as in Rembrandt's inspired transcripts of nature's grandeur and beauty; the ends of comfort and inspiration, as when it preserves, to the third and fourth generation, the visages of the fathers with all that strength or weakness set therein; the ends of memory, as when it reproduces the Sistine mother, or Michelangelo's prophets. This alone is enough to prove engraving to be a great thing. That is *precisely* what it is; great art and great business, the course of which, down the centuries, is lined with splendid monuments. And today it is more important than ever it was, making faithful record of our age in the innumerable services which

it is rendering our time; fixing, beyond forgetfulness, the works by which we succeed, in which we fail, and for which, together, we shall be known. But remember as there can be no good painting without good drawing, so there can be no good engraving. Neither can there be good printing, good architecture or any one of a hundred other things which are at once delightful and useful, without good drawing. Leonardo da Vinci was right when he called it the father of all the arts.

The study of art, in other words, the study of those things which, for whatsoever purpose, are the desirable expressions of human thought, may be a liberalizing study, or a narrowing occupation, according as it endeavors to discover the real purpose of the artist and the principles of his art, or is satisfied with facts of authorship, date, or accepted popular value; in fine, the gossip of art which often passes for culture among uncultivated people. Much, too much, doubtless, has been written and said of the distinction between fine art and mechanic or trade art. Yet for the working purposes of an elementary understanding of either, such a distinction, a distinction never to be drawn hard and fast, has to be insistently made. Not less insistently should stress be placed upon the fact that each form of art has a right, rather, a duty, to look towards perfection, that consummate dignity and beauty which invariably adorn the works of men when those works adequately fulfill their ends, and the ends are useful, or noble, or both. It may be a locomotive, submarine, or aeroplane; "Pastoral Symphony," "King Lear," a vision of nature such as "The Prelude," or of paradise such as Tintoret's, Botticelli's, Fra Angelico's. But there is this great difference between the former and the latter group. The usefulness of the former lasts but a little while, and the ideas expressed are soon lost sight of amidst such change and improvement as have constantly gone on during the past century in the world of applied science, and among the creatures of its making, the real end of which is greater and greater physical convenience to men; applied, not pure science, the end of which is to know; simply, to know; to rejoice in wisdom for her own sake, as the artist and the devotee of art do in beauty which needs no excuse for being save itself. The latter group, music, poetry, and painting, remains steadfast. Great painting, great music, great poetry, in themselves unchanging, grow more and more precious with the passing of years, to all men who truly care for them; whose spiritual state, in great measure, depends upon them; whose legacy of comfort and cheer and pure delight they are;

legacy unaffected by current quotation, or by death duties. And, furthermore, as their value cannot be dimmed by age, so it does not tarnish by neglect. Their worth rises with appreciation, and appreciation, product of an understanding heart, belongs to the lover of beauty and truth; to the great scientist and the great artist alike. The study of those things which are true and beautiful is the sole way which leads to appreciation, and appreciation is the sole surety and witness of culture. Of itself it begets more. To him who has some of it more of it is sure to be given. It is wholly apart from science in the usual sense, applied science, but not from pure. Need a man know the weight and composition of atmospheres, or the laws of refraction of light, to have his heart leap up when he beholds a rainbow? Need he be a grammarian to care for and rejoice in the poem of which this rainbow line is one among many irideseent lines in which heavenly truth is fused into earthly, but imperishable beauty? In fact, lamentable fact, many men either through being made, or making themselves, into what passes muster—less figuratively, examination—for scientist or grammarian, philologist the latter is usually called, and artist too, if we are to judge by that rule-of-thumb edueation in art which some authorities are even now vainly heralding,—many men become such that every quality implied by the word heart is atrophied in them. These are the men who have the German view of education, education in facts to the neglect of imagination, which has fallen heavily upon Americа during reeent decades; part of that killing frost, German Kultur, which, during the same decades, fell upon the whole world. It is eankering materialism. It has masqueraded as science and as art, and it has ruinously discounted both, to the incalculable detriment of true and noble civilization. In just sueh proportion as these men's sum of exaet knowledge is inereased does their capacity to feel and enjoy, in a word, be human, grow less. The opposite should be true, and would be, were it not for their partially successful and deplorable attempt to throttle imagination. Meaningless facts, the husks of culture furnish them, and the "seience" of such husks ultimately becomes pedagogy in a most baneful form, that in which it assumes not only to teach how to teaeh, but to teaeh all subjeets which ean be taught, art unhappily included. For this we have Germany from 1870 on, to thank; not the Germany of Lessing and Goethe. But, and far more important, it is this condition which we have to ehange.

And yet it is not the act of sanity or reason, to undervalue or sneer at the material side of art any more than at the material side of life. For our present purpose the materialist is the man who, in his avowals and his acts, seems—it is doubtful if any man ever really does completely—to deny the use and the worth, alike, of all art which does not have a mechanistic end. The visionary, he may be artist, even great artist, on the other hand, is the man who disregards, either heedlessly or willfully, the everlasting fact that thought is a thing of small use to the man who has it, and of no use at all to other men, until it is given a body to be seen and known of men, and to be delighted in by men. That this body be adequate, or approximately so, implies a thorough understanding of its ingredients; of the laws governing them; of their adaptability to their peculiar ends. And so, too, those of us who care for art in many, or in any of its forms, will get vastly increased returns for our pains and study of it if we give heed, little, if not much, to the material side of the particular art in question at the moment. It was a wise critic as well as a wise woman, and a great artist in her way, who put these words into the mouth of Daniel Deronda: "We should have a poor time of it if we were reduced for all our pleasures to our own performances. A little private imitation of what is good is a sort of private devotion to it, and most of us ought to practice art only in the light of private study—preparation to understand and enjoy what the few can do for us."

There is one other general matter to which some attention must be given before coming to our specific subject. Works of art, the greatest, are not always beautiful, but all works of art, in degree as they are great, must be satisfying or beautiful. An ugly subject, even a vile one, may be as fit for art as the loveliest. The painful, even disgusting, passages of Dante's Hell are lasting poetry, as well as the exquisite passages of his Paradise. There is awful but stupendous art in Michelangelo's "Judgment," and unutterable suffering, almost uttered, in Rubens's "Taking Down from the Cross," just as there is surpassing beauty in Sir Joshua's little "Samuel," or his incomparable "Mrs. Siddons." The quiet lap of water on the shore is lovely. The sea breaking up from its depths and swallowing the dead is awful, but sublime. The art of it all is in the understanding, reverent, awed, and adoring soul of the artist, and in the amount of adoration, awe, and reverence which he contrives to put into his work. It is the business of art to go to the very heart of grandeur and

mediocrity alike, and, finding both to be intensely interesting, make them known as such to men not possessed of the power of seeing to the heart of many things, or perhaps of anything. The true artist is the man who has the utmost insight and sympathy, joined to the utmost powers of expression. He is the man who can invest for us the most ordinary things of every day with extraordinary meaning. He redeems the commonplace by showing men that there is nothing commonplace. In other words, he annihilates the commonplace by showing it to be a figment of the human mind. It is just this that the Dutchmen, led by Rembrandt and Ruisdael, did for homely Flemish landscape, broad meadows, broader skies, and tossing seas; farmhouse and barn, sleek cattle, windmill, and shipping. This, that Claude and Corot did for Italy and France; for the ruins of classic civilization, in the garden of the empire where it was born, and lived, and died, though not before it had scattered the seeds of beauty and significance over Europe and sown them as far as England. This, that Turner, Whistler, and many more did for everyday English countryside, its pretty fields and hills; its quiet streams and "blown seas"; the softly running Thames of Spenser. In pictorial art Turner's "Blair Athol" is a counterpart of the muddy Thames, making its sordid way—not sordid to Whistler—under Battersea Bridge. The builders of Battersea made a useful bridge. Whistler's painting made an eternal bridge of it; eternal under time, as Sir Thomas Browne would say. And all these men, these artists and numberless more, were engravers and made use of engraving in one form or another for recording permanently what they had to say. It is these records, prints we call them, drawings really, their origins and development technically, their meaning and value artistically, on the worldly and unworldly side, which form the subject of this book.

Raphael Morghen, "one of the last of the great engravers," as Keppel in his very useful and highly entertaining book on engraving calls him, died in 1833. Six years later, in 1839, Daguerre announced the discovery of photography to the world. It is not easy to agree with Keppel when we recall the fact that the volumes of Rogers's "Poems" and "Italy" appeared in 1834, the year after Morghen's death; books full, like many others which appeared during the two succeeding decades, of, in some respects, the most extraordinary engraving ever done; work over the names of Finden, Wilmore, Goodhall, Charles Turner, Miller, Le Keux, and many more. Keppel further remarks that today, four centuries after

the golden age of engraving dawned upon the world, "the ray of light which prints its image upon the sensitive plate of the camera falls aslant upon the fading glory of engraving." This somewhat mournful note, or theme, in many minds becomes a dirge, and so entirely that one not infrequently hears engraving called a dead art. Finally, many persons are of the opinion that photography gave engraving its death thrust. Some bemoan this supposed fact. Others, more perhaps, glory in it. Neither party is wholly right, for, while one may be an intense lover of engraving, he should remain heartily thankful for the accomplishments of photography. They are no more hostile to each other than pure science and great art. They are utterly separate; as much divided from each other as things can be that in one case derive their whole value from "fundamental brain work," the foundation of art, as Rossetti expressed it; in the other case are the visible, no matter how wonderful, expressions of mechanical contrivance; mechanical ingenuity. Imagination, that power of the human mind which is "inpoured at birth, and can be had through no human willing," Wordsworth's "awful power," is that, and always that, which in the last reaction can level the barriers of time and space, reaching beyond the telegraph, beyond the telescope, laying open the domain of thought, past, present, and to come. It is this power of the mind, seizing hold upon the facts which our senses gather, their meaning lit up, so to speak, by the "auxiliar light of the inner mind," which alone truly illumines the spirits of men; on one hand, by new mechanical contrivances, lessening "the tasked burden of the weary world," applied science and mechanic art; on the other, by discovering beauty, to add "fresh lustre to the day," and, in the forms of art, create those things which, not practically useful, are none the less indispensable for the spiritual content and well-being of really intelligent and civilized men—poetry, music, and drawing as such, or in the form of engraving. It is literally true that "in nature beauty dies, in art never"; that beauty is essential to human happiness and that art is the preserver and expounder as well as the creator of beauty.

There are no dead arts. No art can die that ever was alive; meaning by alive, giving utterance to thoughts of vital import to the race, fearful or beautiful. The processes of art can die and do. The materials of art can perish and must. Practice and methods may change, and always have, but the vital meanings of life and nature are forever new, though

essentially unchanging. So Helen of Troy retains her youth, immortal; so the Venus of Melos; so Francesca da Rimini and Beatrice; and no less Leonardo's Christ in "The Last Supper," Raphael's "Mother and Child" of the Sistine Madonna, Beethoven's choral breaking out in that transcendent finale of "The Ninth Symphony," when, on a sudden, the music seems taken up by heaven,—the business of art is to bring heavenly beauty to the eyes and ears of earth; Bach's "Passion," Handel's "Dead March in Saul," Tintoret's "Crucifixion," Rubens's "Descent"; things all equally outside the realm of science, yet, like it, resting their existence on truth and risking all for her, the essence of which is uttered reverence; the reverence of religion, not of theology; the thing meant when, looking at a wonderful dancer, Margaret Fuller said to Emerson, "Ralph, it is poetry," and he returned, "Margaret, it is religion"; what Ruskin meant when he declared all great art to be praise. With such art, mechanical contrivances can no more cope than the singing machine or the player with a Patti or a Paderewski. The point is that mechanical art does not really try to cope. It is only those who do not know the difference between it and that other art, which for lack of a better word we call fine, who imagine that it tries. Photography has never, in the hands or minds of people who really know about the facts in the case, attempted rivalry with engraving. It would be difficult to find a man hardy enough to maintain that Rembrandt's etched landscapes, or Whistler's, have been approached, not to say equalled, by photography. It is vulgar to point out the fact that where one would bring a few dollars at most, the others will any day fetch hundreds and thousands. Further, it is stupid to argue about the obvious. Finally, it would be, is, grossly uncritical, as well as ungenerous, to disregard or abuse photography, one of the boons bestowed by the application of science upon daily life; one, probably the greatest, modern factor for disseminating knowledge of the highest forms of art. Instead of thinking of Daguerre as the destroyer of the art of engraving, hence, in a measure, of drawing, he should be looked on as its preserver and expositor. But none the less does photography stand outside the charmed circle of the fine arts.

In one or other of its forms engraving—what Ruskin in a moment of didactic inspiration called multiplied drawing—has been the medium chosen by many of the greatest men for the expression of their thought, from the time of Holbein, Dürer, and Raphael through the age of Claude

and Rembrandt, later Reynolds and Turner, down to Whistler, not to mention the names of living men. It is thus that engraving stands in relation to painting, music, poetry, sculpture, and architecture, to name the most important of the fine arts; i.e., as an art, like them, dependent upon imagination and reason; an art capable of stating facts, and setting those facts, vital and natural, in their true relation to beauty, grandeur, awfulness, and even prettiness; to convey knowledge, and to gloss meaning, and all with a technique which in itself is beautiful.

CHAPTER I.

DRAWING AND ENGRAVING

THE life and dignity of all pictures derive primarily from outline drawing. It is the first essential of truth-telling about the subject depicted, and, be it remembered, all good drawing *is* truth-telling by means of lines, just as all good writing and speaking are truth-telling by means of words; signs signifying definite intellectual concepts in one and the other case equally. An obvious fact, yet one almost universally unheeded in this connection, and especially by teachers of drawing, is that of spatial relations in the most literal sense. For example, two apples set side by side, or two heads, or any of the main masses which compose a picture, however intricate, must first be outlined as individuals. Most people seem to think that it is enough if the right shape be got, and so of course it is; but these same people rarely recognize this further fact that the spaces between head and head, apple and apple, are also shapes and must be drawn accurately. To draw the spaces accurately means having drawn the objects accurately, and vice versa. To look first at one, and then at the other, and to get the results to tally is, in a manner, analogous to adding a column of figures first up and then down,—not a parallel, but an analogy; an analogy in which much help exists for him who does not know it, and so much obviousness for him who does that he is apt to assume that every one knows it. The assumption that every one knows certain illuminating facts which seem obvious to the expert, artist, art teacher, or art critic, whether it be in connection with children or grown people, is the negation alike of advancing the practice and the appreciation of art. It is not to be assumed that this mode of procedure in regard to spatial relations, as here defined, can be carried very far. It is certain, however, that it is a mode of procedure which can be carried much further than it usually is; a very valuable mode of procedure because it implies a keen-eyed and clear-

Fig. 2. Pencil Drawing. William Blake.

minded start. It matters not in the least whether it be the start of practitioner or appreciator of art.

What has been said is equally applicable whether the subject be that which the artist's eye actually sees, that which his hand even can touch and measure, material reality so-called, or that which the mind feels and thinks; what may, for want of a better term, and by way of explaining the antithesis involved, be spoken of as spiritual reality. The question resolves itself into a distinction between actual matter and the significance which such matter assumes when thought about intelligently, and felt about deeply. The great artist, the genius, deals with both these aspects of the question. The rank and file of artists, the man of talent, deals only with one aspect. The same holds of the critic class, from veriest layman to expert. I do not say that many artists who produce things which are both useful and delightful are not to be found in the latter class, that of the talented. Sad would it be were this not true. But it is far sadder, in the long run of life, not to learn to recognize the pole-wide difference between the works of men of talent and those of the man of genius, for in

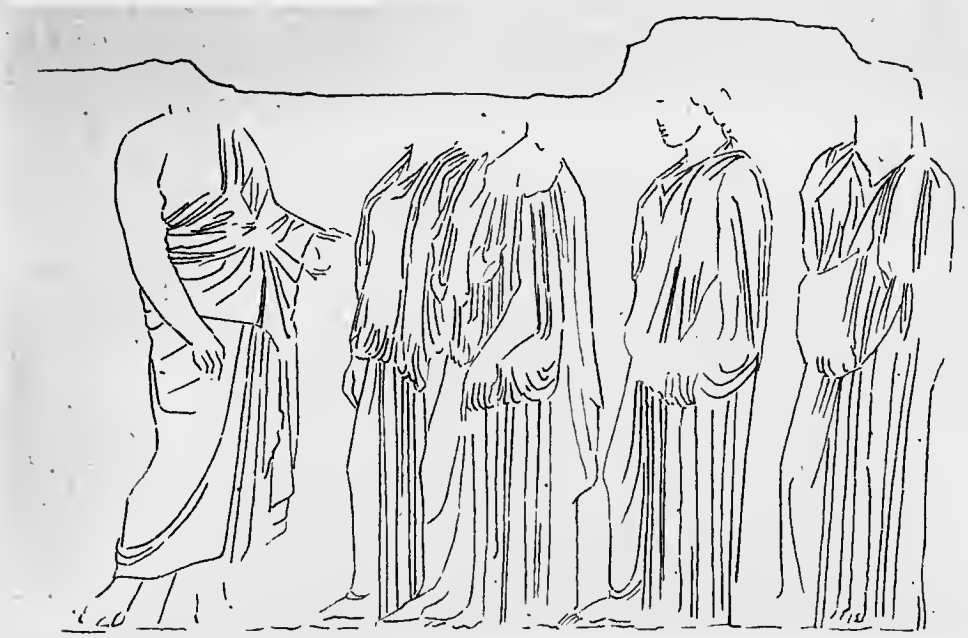


Fig. 3. The Parthenon Frieze.

the work of the latter only is ever-increasing and permanent inspiration to be found.

When we have made sure of our bearings thus far, either as draughtsman, artist, critic,—we should not lose sight of the fact that every man is potentially both critic and artist, i.e., sure as to the fundamental importance which attaches to outline drawing, in and of itself,—we must, if we are to take another step along the *via critica*, consider truths which are over and above those which outline alone can tell. In other words, we must begin to think about the parts which go to make up the whole; what are known as details. For example, in Blake's drawing (Fig. 2) we behold a portrayal of nature in one of its essential aspects. Quite apart from any specific value which attaches to the lines, as such, of this fine drawing, is the dominating idea of a certain sensuous dignity and a sweet, yet powerful, gentleness of demeanor which Blake has infused into the subject. It is just that which makes this a truly great drawing and separates it from a possible hundred others which, at first glance, may appear to be its equals. What we really have here is the true picture of a state of mind, expressed

by an actual arrangement of draperies governed from within by the movements of the human bodies which they clothe, and which they not only clothe but reveal. From this quiet rhythm of lines, each one as clearly intended from the start as the very best of Angelo's or Dürer's; as firm and fully vitalized, and of the same sort as the lines in the very best figures of the Parthenon frieze (Fig. 3); from this quiet rhythm of lines there springs an all-compelling sense of the artist's intention, which was not the mere crea-

Fig. 4. Mer de Glace. J. M. W. Turner.

tion of a line rhythm, but a far greater thing, namely, the portrayal of the mighty significance, the fact of that spiritual beauty which pertains to the physical dignity of man at his best. It is this, and this alone, on which genius always focuses its every effort and which, in its best accomplishment, the immortal things of art, it always attains. The specific subject does not matter. It may vary as widely as the ends of the earth, the utmost seasons, the remotest races, God and the devil; the Sistine

Adam; Dürer's St. Paul in "The Four Apostles" at Dresden; the Parthenon Theseus; those consummate Buddhas of the ancient East, carved or painted; those trees, beyond which drawing of trees has not gone, at the left side of Turner's "Blair Athol" (Fig. 67).

A point to be borne in mind is this. The subject for a great picture, painting, engraving, drawing, need, in no sense, be taken from what we are still too apt to regard as the only important source, Aristotle's man in action under stress of emotion. Nature, wholly apart from man, likewise

Fig. 5. The Great Wave. Hokusai.

offers subjects of the first importance. Majesty does not pertain to humanity alone. The making this fact evident through works has been the splendid gift which, taken in the broadest sense, the art of the modern world has bestowed. The mountains are full of such subjects and not less the sea. The least blade of grass, stem of bloom, and giant tree. So, too, the sky of ceaselessly changeful mood, down across which fall the long lines of rain, and the rays of light which are the measureless lines of immeasurable space.

"Over the lonesome sand the ocean draws a fold
Of silver, starry, wide,
Embroidered with the moon,
The mantle of the tide."

Turner's "Mer de Glace" (Fig. 4), Hokusai's "Great Wave" (Fig. 5), Sagakudo's "Rose and Honeysuckle" (Fig. 6), and Rembrandt's "Three Trees" (Fig. 54), are as much the witnesses to greatness as those already mentioned.

To return now to the parts of the whole, those details of a picture to which even the most uncritical critic and the poorest artist give such heed as they can. What are they and what is their purpose, and what limits, if any, condition their value? All detail may be divided, for convenience' sake, into two main classes, internal and external. Internal detail would include every touch, whether of light and shade, or for adding to the sum of reported fact; touches of light and shade which give form and the look of reality to draperies, let us say, or which tell us about their pattern,—every touch, for whatsoever purpose, which is set within the outline, that first truth-telling about the subject which we have already considered. All detail within the bounding line which may be the description of a man's head, the body of a beast, the fleecy mound of a cloud, the imponderable mass of a great billow, or any other thing in heaven or earth, is put there with the intent of adding to the artist's ultimate expression of truth as his picture shall convey truth to the world, and continue to do so throughout the ages.

External detail, on the other hand, means every touch which helps to complete both the foreground and background of the subject as a whole. For example, the comet, the rainbow and the dread creature bearing the legend in the mid-sky of Dürer's mystically magnificent "Melancholia" (Fig. 34); all the tools of labor and of art, even the lamb and the cryptic numbers; these, and many more, are external details to that woman of incomparable mould, thoughtful beyond wont, the heart of this famous subject. However, in this connection we should not forget that it is often impossible to make hard and fast distinctions between interior and exterior detail, for the reason that many pictures, landscapes in particular, admit of no certain decision as to what is the heart of them, the central and dominant subject, as in the "Melancholia" or Martin Schongauer's "Christ Appearing to the

Magdalen'' (Fig. 26). Sometimes, often in landscapes, Turner's ''Dumblain Abbey'' (Fig. 65), for example, light, distance, even space itself, forms the true subject; subject wholly dependent upon innumerable objects,—trees, the ruin, distant bridge and hills, each, in itself, a matter of detail, but neither

Fig. 6. Japanese Print. Sagakudo.

external nor internal, the subject made evident only by its *effect upon* these details. An analogy is to be seen in the life of a willow, life itself invisible but made evident by reddening stems in late winter, silvery bloom of early spring, green leaves of late; these facts, details, known for certain to the senses of sight and touch, the sure evidence of that something more

important still which we call life; intangible, invisible. Accepting this fact of the inseparability of the subject, or heart of a picture, from the minor and often uncountable parts which together make up the whole picture; and being always prepared to meet with pictures, often the greatest, in which no sharp alignment of this sort can be made, we shall, none the less, find the distinction between external and internal detail extremely useful for purposes of criticism, whether elementary or advanced.

For all ordinary purposes, drawing may be defined as the producing of a picture, by means of lines, whether the bald outline such as a child will make for conveying the fact that an apple is a round fruit and has a stem, or such an outline filled in by an adept draughtsman with endless minute and delicate touches which give the appearance of convexity, together with a record of the least irregularity of surface and the subtlest variations of hue; pale touches for the yellow and darker for the red. The word draw means to drag, or to move towards oneself, a tool which leaves a mark behind it, preëminently the lead pencil. It may be said that all drawing consists of two parts, following the clear distinction of the Romans, who had a word for each part and from whom we have inherited a word for each: *Delineare; de*, 'from'; and *linea*, 'line'; to represent by line; our 'to delineate,' 'to outline.' Their other word, *adumbrare*, means to shade and make shadow; 'adumbrate' is our word; it means drawing in chiaroscuro, or by means of light and shade; i.e., giving the appearance of convexity and variation of surface within the outline.

The Greek words γραφειν, 'to draw,' 'to write,' and γραφή, 'a drawing,' 'a picture,' from which comes our word graphic, pictorial, i.e., made with the instrument by which writing is done, a pencil or pen, point to those remote days when writing and drawing were one; the ancient days of Egyptian hieroglyphics or picture-writing; the picture of a bird when the idea of a bird was to be conveyed, by means of marks on sheets of papyrus, or slabs of basalt. And once more, in medieval days, writing and drawing again became virtually one, as is plain to all who are acquainted with thirteenth- and fourteenth-century French missals or the yet earlier books of the Near East, for example, those written or drawn by the skillful Arabs. And that this idea still has much of life in it is proved by a comment of Huxley in his "Technical Education." "Still everybody, or almost everybody can learn to write and as writing is a kind of drawing I suppose . . . the majority of people could draw." With this much by way of

a definition of what drawing is, and means, the *what* of the whole matter, we are next confronted by that other question which all endeavor raises for the thoughtful, i.e., the *how*.

The *how*, in connection with drawing, means technique. It may be said that technique consists of two parts. There is the technique of the tools. For example, the way of handling a pencil so that it will make marks light or dark, dots or lines, and lines continuous or broken, as the draughtsman wishes. And there is the technique of the drawing itself, that look which is the peculiar and necessary result of the draughtsman's having manipulated his tool, the pencil, in precisely the way that he did. The piano player's technique consists of the way in which he strikes the keys, i.e., his '*touch*,' whereas the technique of the music he produces is quite another thing, being the expression of his sympathy with, hence power to interpret, the music as it was written by, for instance, Beethoven. Between drawing and playing there is, in this particular respect at least, a close analogy. Thackeray, in "Vanity Fair," speaks both clearly and to the point when he says: "To use a cue at billiards well is like using a pencil or a German flute, or a small sword [all tools, mark]. You cannot master [mastery means good technique] any one of these implements at first and it is only by repeated study and perseverance, joined to a natural taste, that a man can excel in handling either."

It should be remarked that there are many other tools used by the draughtsman besides the pencil, in the class with which would be included pens, crayons, chalk sticks, and many more. There are, as a matter of fact, two classes of draughtsman's tools, namely, pencils and such as are similar, the free-hand tools, and compasses, rules, T squares, triangles, and others of this sort, the mechanical tools. The distinction between the two is this: free-hand tools are those which impose no mechanical instrument—compasses for making a perfect circle, by way of illustration—between the draughtsman's hand and the paper on which the drawing is to be made. Mechanical tools are those which do so impose a mechanical instrument; for example, the rule which is laid upon the paper and along which the pencil is drawn in order to produce the perfectly or mechanically straight line. Upon the distinction between these two classes of tools rests the distinction between what is called free-hand drawing and what is known as mechanical drawing; the former being the work of an artist; the latter, that of a professional draughtsman, machine designer, carpenter or plumber.

The artist, the man who is always outlining or drawing objects from nature, hill contours, leaf forms or cloud shapes, the features of men and women, the form of the human body or the likenesses of animals, is always dealing with that which is never mechanical and even when most symmetrical is never exactly alike on both sides. In other words, the artist is always trying to represent that which is endlessly varied, for endless variation is the prime characteristic of what is natural, or God-created. Are there mechanically perfect circles in nature; mechanically straight lines? All such are, in a word, unnatural, and it is upon nature that the artist rests his entire cause. "From nature doth emotion come," and, as all know, emotion is the soul of every great work of art; emotion bridled by reason. But the man who makes working drawings for the wheels and bars of an engine, as he intends to require perfect circles and absolutely straight edges of the steelsmith who shall follow his drawings and, so to speak, translate them into material existence, will demand perfect circles and absolutely straight, in other words, mechanically perfect lines in his own drawing. To get such he must have recourse to mechanical instruments, rule and compass. The very tools which will give him what he needs if used by the artist ruin the latter's work. That slight but ceaseless change of direction which, through the seeing eye, the thinking mind beholds in the bounding lines of whatever object it chooses to depict from nature, and demands shall be reproduced as far as may be in its depiction, is only possible when the instrument is, as a lead pencil or similar tool, deftly and sensitively held in the fingers. Then and then only is it possible for the mind to enforce its dictates. For example, the lead point at the end of the compass is not at the mind's behest. The mind in this case has abdicated, so to speak, to the mechanical instrument. This is right for making the drawing of a wheel, but it is useless and wrong for laying off those subtly changeful curves which bound a well-developed human body, or outlining a wave of the sea. What of the man who should take compasses to copy Dürer's "Adam and Eve" (Fig. 35), or Hokusai's "Great Wave" (Fig. 5)? And, more, what of one who should undertake to draw such subjects direct from nature with dividers and straight edge? In free-hand drawing, the drawing of an artist, the *ne plus ultra* consists of accurate representation of endlessly changeful form by a pencil held in the pulsating, therefore unsteady, human hand under the maximum of muscular control and mental dictation. It is not that free-hand drawing is good and mechan-

ical bad, but that each has a place of its own and, in the other's place, is, and must be, bad. It all comes down to the fundamental fact that nature is never mechanical in her outward evidences and it is these outward evidences, the visible world, with which art deals, whereas the human mind is or has become largely mechanical and a great part of its expression, the visible evidence of its existence, machines for example, must of necessity be mechanical. At least so it seems in our mechanistic time. The pith of all this is nicely summed up by Delacroix in one of his notebooks.

"There are some lines which are monstrous; the straight line; the regular serpentine,—above all two parallels. When man creates these the elements destroy them. Regular lines are only found in the brain. Then comes the charm of things which are ancient or in ruin; ruin brings the object closer to nature."

The drawing which consists of outline only, and that other drawing which, within the outline, adds light and shade by means of many minor touches and combinations of touches, has been spoken of. There is a prevalent idea, Ruskin gave it great prestige in his remarkable and most useful book, "The Elements of Drawing," that pure outlines untouched by shade are bad. It is difficult to understand how any one, much less a man so fully acquainted with the drawing of the great artists, could even propose such a thesis. He says: "And therefore the rule that no good drawing can exist throughout of pure outline remains absolute." The single example of Botticelli as he appears in the incomparably masterful drawings in pure outline made to illustrate the "Divine Comedy" (Fig. 16), is more than enough to refute such a view. But it is none the less true that many of the greatest artists, such men as Raphael and Titian, did almost invariably throw a veil of shade over parts of their drawings. And yet it is to be remembered that there is a great difference between the drawing which is done as a means to an end, drawings in the sense of preliminary studies for pictures, for paintings, and that drawing which is meant to be an end in itself,—any one of Botticelli's for the "Divine Comedy." Every one of the drawings which comprise the Botticelli set is a miracle, but no single one is more of a miracle than that which shows us the proud bent low beneath heavy weights as they move slowly along the special terrace allotted to their sin in "Purgatory"; particularly that portion which shows Dante bending down to talk with the miniature painter of Gubbio, both going forward "with equal pace, as oxen in the yoke." Hamerton speaks

of "the accurate use of line" as being the first thing necessary to learn. So it is, but not less is it the thing which all the greatest artists exercise to the end. Botticelli's illustrations offer examples of the "accurate use of line" by the hundred. But every one of them has the invariable attributes of the accurate user of line; of line lifted to the level of highest dignity, namely, beauty inherent in itself and quite apart from that transcendent beauty which results from the combining of the many to make the unified whole which we recognize as the finished, powerful and lovely drawing.

These invariable qualities are an even thickness throughout the entire length of the line with none of that laborious yet meaningless shaded effect

Fig. 7. The Gold-weigher's Field. Rembrandt.

of old-fashioned penmanship; the so-called '*hair*' and '*heavy*' lines blending into one another. Again, the same depth of color throughout the entire length of each line is another of these invariable attributes. Finally, and most important of all, the close approach to straightness throughout the length of every line, rather than a bellying fullness. What look to be curves when examined closely turn out to be combinations of almost but not quite straight or, geometrically speaking, right lines. In other words, the drawing of the best men is a matter of delicate angles rather than full or loose curves. It is just such lines that Blake uses (Fig. 2), and Raphael in his "Lucretia" (Fig. 38), in particular, her arms; the same that Dürer uses in the "Melancholia" (Fig. 34), viz., the feathers of her wings; the same Rembrandt uses in the "Gold-weigher's Field" (Fig. 7). It is the

sort of line which comprises the legs, thighs, torso, arms, and heads of such a Greek statue as the Hermes, or the figures of the Parthenon frieze (Fig. 3); and not less the sort which defines the echinus of every one of the Parthenon capitals or the contours of fifth-century Greek vases, together with the subjects drawn upon them. No man has spoken more clearly on this point than Birge Harrison when he says: "Drawing is the grammar of art. As grammar is the framework on which all good literature is built, so drawing is the foundation of all good painting. . . . Fortunately, both grammar and drawing may be learned by anyone of good average intelligence. In reference to drawing, however, this statement applies only to that kind of good, sound commonplace drawing which serves to uphold a picture in which color and sentiment are the main things; but not, of course, to the truly great drawing which is beautiful in and by itself, and which is one of the rarest qualities in all art—so rare indeed that the great draughtsmen of the world can be counted upon the fingers of one hand. Of these probably Holbein and Leonardo were the most eminent examples. In the work of these two men the sense of refined and tender line was so exquisite that we should almost prefer to have it without color." In fine, it is the line of life and strength—life because curved, i.e., always changing, and strength, because the curving is always held in firm restraint.

There are high possibilities for beauty in lines, quite apart from any beauty and significance which they may take in combination with other lines, just as there is in a patch of color which has no meaning because it is not in the shape of anything to which we attach meaning, as, for example, a face, a flower, or a leaf. Such lines, for lack of a better expression, may be called free lines. They should not be confused with the free-hand lines already discussed, although all first-rate free lines must of necessity be free-hand drawn—i.e., not mechanical. The free line is perhaps the only absolute means of expressing the possible grace, strength and beauty of abstract thought which man possesses. Its only possible rival is the musical sound or note uncombined with others to the extent even of making a chord, and much less creating a theme. As offering illustration of the free line nothing surpasses the tails of capital letters such as were drawn by hundreds in the missals, breviaries, and manuscript books (Fig. 8) of the wonderful thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The consummate artist-draughtsman is he who uses such lines as have

been discussed, whether with or without adding shade to them. It often happens in the end that shade is used so fully as to conceal all lines, as such, leaving to the beholder naught but the sense of the solid reality of one object relieved against a background of other objects. This is the case in

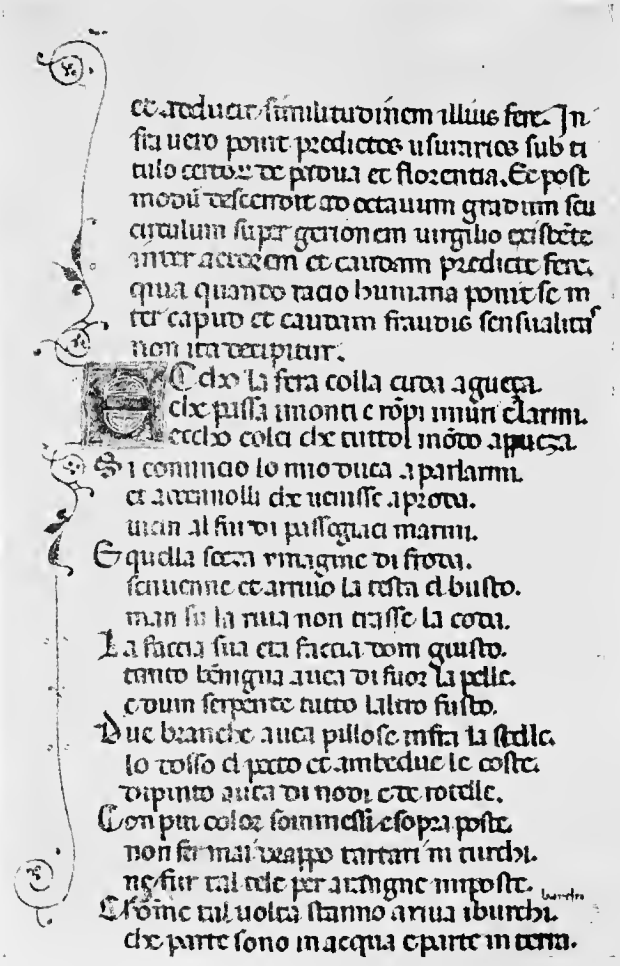


Fig. 8. Dante's Divine Comedy. (14th century.)

Dürer's "Adam and Eve" (Fig. 35); completely the case in Turner's "Norham Castle" (Fig. 68). In such cases the outline becomes as inseparable a part of the drawing of the object to which it sets limits, and gives definition, as is the edge, viewed from whatever angle, of a statue,

or a column, or a vase. It is thus that a line, in the ordinary sense of the word, may be regarded as a convention. It is a thing that does not exist in nature but is the one thing upon which all artistic representation of nature depends, though at times concealed in drawing; for example, "Norham Castle"; and, as it almost always is in painting, the "Sistine Madonna." But this matter will be touched on again. For the present it is necessary to recognize only the fact that all pure line, i.e., lines which tell as such, marks of whatever sort which we recognize as lines,—that every pure line is a convention, i.e., a mode of procedure based, in the sense of copied, upon nothing in nature, but which none the less enables us to represent recognizably, and to explain with clearness, much that is in nature. The camera takes no cognizance of the convention of line, for its mechanical eye sees nothing but what is reflectable by the lens. Man invented the convention and great men manage to employ it in such a way as enables them to gloss and illumine many of the fundamentally beautiful significances of nature which are invisible to a merely mechanically sensitive eye, the camera's or that of the man who is merely camera-eyed; in fine, unphilosophic, unpoetic, unthoughtful.

One other point of great importance, and one endlessly discussed in relation to art, especially to the art of drawing as it stands in relation to literature, is that of style. Style is as easy to recognize as the indubitable sign of life in men and plants, and as important. Further, it is just as impossible to define. It implies all that is meant by personality,—personality of manner, of speech, of mind, as we recognize them in the men about us, whether agreeable or the opposite. It means that indefinable, ungraspable, but truly knowable stamp of individuality of mind which sets a certain man's work apart from all other. It means the personal manner in which one man does what he does and in which manner no other man ever did that same thing, and which no other man has succeeded, or ever can, in copying. For example, the style of Leonardo da Vinci or Hans Holbein at their best;—Leonardo in his plant drawings, oak or columbine; Holbein in his red-chalk Windsor portraits (Fig. 9); drawings which have the highest distinction; which exist, like great men, apart from others, yet powerfully influencive of others; actual forces for the humanizing of mankind; the world's guarantee of culture. It is by studying the work of such men that one learns the difference between real style in drawing and that which many mistake for style, mere mannerisms. The drawing of great men, if it

shows lines, as such, and it usually does, makes every line tell facts respecting form. Every line is used to describe something just as every word is by a master of language. Every touch, least and greatest, is of evident purpose and understandable to him who really studies the drawing

Fig. 9. Hans Holbein.

of such men as Leonardo, Botticelli, Dürer, Holbein and, in modern times, Turner, Millet, and Whistler. Mannerism consists in using lines which do not tell anything of form, or add to the facts expressed by the picture as a whole, but which may, none the less, be interesting enough in themselves. Those touches in a drawing, like those words in writing which

exist for themselves and not for the good of the whole, are mannered touches, and no matter how lovely, *per se*, or how distinctive in themselves, are bad as art. All great draughtsmen-artists are utterly above mannerism, notably the Chinese and Japanese. Men who draw as Merejkowski describes Leonardo's drawing are masters of style and as far removed from pedantry, only another word for mannerism, as the East is from the West. To be mannered in his way of drawing is equivalent to saying that a draughtsman has ceased to think. It is what the majority do as soon as they get a passable likeness of their subject when they begin to go on adding touches, lines, and dots without knowing what each one means. Rembrandt and Van Dyck as well as Holbein and Leonardo, all the truly great, are unconditionally above such waste of time, and therefore are true masters of style because each succeeds in expressing his personal reaction to his chosen subject in a way that is likewise personal and always startlingly direct.

Merejkowski says: "Sometimes Leonardo would draw a flower or a tree, trying to seize the living likeness as in the portrait of a man; that unique, particular aspect of his model which would never be repeated."

Goethe said to Eckermann: "I have lately been so fortunate as to buy, at a reasonable rate, many excellent drawings by celebrated masters, Such drawings are invaluable, not only because they give, in its purity, the mental intention of the artist, but because they bring immediately before us the mood of his mind at the moment of creation." More adequately than these men have spoken has no man spoken about style in drawing. But as reading books is worth more than reading about them, and as hearing music is worth more than hearing about it, so looking at drawings is a hundred-fold more illuminating and inspiring than reading about them. Yet still the truth of Plato's word holds true that there is nothing but can be made plainer by being talked about.

CHAPTER II.

THE BEGINNINGS OF LINE ENGRAVING IN ITALY

ENGRAVINGS are those pictures which many people think of as gray, black and cold representations of well-known masterpieces of painting; Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" or Titian's "Assumption," shorn of their color and reduced to a matter of light and shade produced by an elaborate interweaving of lines and dots; reproductions, not always well drawn, of great originals, and, as people often may be heard to say, very good for an age that knew not photography. There are few persons who do not cherish a good photograph of Rembrandt's portrait of himself, or his portrait of that old woman in a white cap and ruff, or a fine carbon of one of Turner's or Gainsborough's landscapes, yet all will agree that far more useful and inspiring exponents of such artistic genius as these things represent are to be found in the first-hand works of the artists themselves.

If we were offered original drawings by Rembrandt, Turner, or Gainsborough we should deem it a great boon, because in an artist's drawing, no matter how slight, we come into direct contact with his genius. The finished picture by the same hand is frequently the result of many drawings;—notes made of rapidly fleeting effects of nature, or expression of face and movement of the body, or still more rapidly fleeting thought: notes set down with all the accuracy and delicacy of which the artist is capable. But in the finished picture the artist's method of composing and his manner of thinking are often partially concealed by intricate finish of detail and complexity of technique. The picture is so wonderful a thing that we look at it in admiration, and are awe-struck at the genius of its maker, but are unable adequately to comprehend either. All this, which is equally true of such highly finished drawings as an artist intends shall be

regarded as completed works of art in and by themselves, is even truer of painting. However, turning to an artist's drawings, those which often are little more than sketches, and studying them, we may in some measure discover and follow the suggestions, in line and wash, which, elaborated in the finished picture, produced the admired result. From his drawings we may learn what were the facts which stimulated head and hand to their labor, and so, by adding simple facts to our information about the finished work, lay the foundation for an intelligent and appreciative comprehension of that work. In the process, moreover, we shall learn to value and understand a drawing as a precious work of art in itself.

Two men may sit side by side and make pictures of the same scene, and from one of these pictures, it may be the one which is least of a literal transcript of the scene, will spring pleasant, illuminating, and inspiriting thought on the part of a spectator, while the other produces no such effect. Let an analogy serve for illustration. I was once walking by a foaming brook and I came to a place where the water fell into a deep pool, and the pool was bridged. A white ram came to this spot, and stood still upon the bank; I saw him, together with the grass and trees, the mountains and sky, perfectly reflected in the smooth surface of the pool. Listen now to Wordsworth's description of this scene.

> "And having reached a bridge that overarched
> The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
> In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
> A two-fold image: on a grassy bank
> A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
> Another and the same. Most beautiful
> On the green turf, with his imperial front
> Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb
> The breathing creature stood: as beautiful
> Beneath him showed his shadowy counter-part.
> Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
> And each seemed centre of his own fair world:
> Antipodes unconscious of each other,
> Yet in partition with their several spheres
> Blended in perfect stillness to our sight."

In these lines we have an expression of the poetic genius for seeing and feeling, and the poetic power for relating; two underlying requisites of a

work of great art; keen and appreciative insight, in degree far more penetrative than that which is commonly given to man, together with a form, manner, in a word, technique, developed beyond that which most men ever attain to, or of which they are capable. In one account we have a draft of the facts, fairly well set forth; a draft which may be taken in some degree to resemble the rapid notes made by the poet on the spot. In the other, Wordsworth's account, these same facts are embodied in a form of imperishable beauty, and we are made thereby joint heirs in a work of consummate art. Surely nobody will deny the desirability of possessing such drafts, data, sketches or drawings as have in any way served a master, whether poet or artist. And, further yet, how doubly invaluable must be the drafts of such men, we call them drawings in the artist's case, when they are, by their authors, regarded as complete in themselves. This raises the question, 'Where can we get such invaluable objects as Rembrandt and Turner drawings?'—drawings regarded by them as the means to an end, or as ends in themselves. The answer, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is inevitable—'Nowhere'; and a sorrowful answer it would be if there were absolutely no remedy.

But suppose we are offered, as substitutes for the drawings of Rembrandt, Turner, and many more, etchings and engravings by them; that of these we are told there are many in the world, and that, in reality, they are the same things as drawings, because their authors, instead of drawing with pencil and pen upon sheets of paper in the usual way, have drawn upon plates of metal with a sharp instrument, from which plates numerous ink impressions have been taken, should we not be pleased a thousand-fold at the world's good fortune in possessing many authentic works of genius in place of one? Glad that those who practice art as well as those who love it and find solace in it, though they never drew a line, can have access in many an American city and town to original works by the most famous artists, as easily as if they lived in London or Paris; that we may see examples of the best drawings by the masters—objects far more desirable and precious than second-rate paintings can ever be, though they bear the signatures of the most notable practitioners of the art? "The unwise," says Candide, "value every word in an author of repute"; so also do the unwise value every line and stroke by an artist of renown. It is not necessary to discuss the relative value of photographs in this connection, but it is essential to an understanding of the point of view, and to any adequate under-

standing of the engraver's and the etcher's art, to getting a correct and enthusiastic appreciation of prints in general, that the extremely intimate relation between drawing and engraving be insisted on: a relation that amounts, as has been said, to identity. Once more I would emphasize the fact that it is through the drawings of the masters that we can penetrate most deeply into their purposes, and get the most accurate comprehension of the sources and means of their power; in other words, and this is the goal of appreciation, become sharers in the world's best achievement.

By power, artistic power, is meant an artist's ability to look upon life and nature with interpretative vision; to see and grasp meanings not generally dreamt of; this, together with unusual ability in his hand for recording what he sees, in line, and light, and shade, and color. We have an instance of artistic power defined in quite wonderful fashion by Sir Frederic Leighton when he says, speaking of Albert Dürer, "If I may use his own characteristic expression, 'to make known through his work' the mysterious treasure that was laid up in his heart." To be moved, to become impassioned, to lose himself that he may find himself, is an essential ingredient of great artistic power; the *sine qua non* of a real artist. To have the capacity to discriminate with reason, in the presence of that infinite complexity which is nature, and to trace, through such complexity, certain definite expressions of governing order, and to choose a few facts from the many, and those few such as shall best make known what it is the artist was intent upon at the given instant in the life of his subject; this also is an essential ingredient of artistic power. The artist looks on nature and is fired with enthusiasm. He falls in love with certain of her aspects—sublimity, grandeur, loveliness, or it may be fearfulness, awfulness, relentlessness. As artist it is his especial province to set these forth in finite and limited forms of truth and beauty; to "put the infinite within the finite," which is how Browning defined poetry. In a picture, which can at most include but a few chosen facts about the theme that stimulated him to the act of artistic interpretation, the artist declares himself; declares to all who shall look at his picture something of what he saw and felt; that something which you and I have seen and felt vaguely he enables us to feel and see clearly. The most carefully finished picture and the slightest sketch or drawing from the hand of genius can not do less.

Nature and art the artist of the highest order knows to be forever separate, and yet never for an instant will he separate them in his own

thought. All art is founded on nature, as the reflection in the mirror is based on the reality of the objects reflected, but with this eternal difference, that the artist's mirror, his mind, not only makes a reflection, but acts freely upon that reflection, making comment thereon; clarifying it with the all-powerful reagent which truly artistic minds alone possess and know how to use, imagination. The lens and sensitized film of the camera act like the mirror. Their realm is the realm of present fact. Neither of them has the first foothold in the realm of thought, the only power allotted to man whereby he may set facts aright, and make them serve his ends. The artist has his life in two worlds at once; the world of visions and the world of fact. Genius can only be accurately measured by its ability to extend the confines of the world of vision beyond the limits of the world of reality. Not the smallest creature, the most insignificant plant, the littlest thing in the world of fact can truly become a subject of the domain of art, i.e., of mind, of imagination, emotion, reason, without undergoing a change; without being transformed; it may be translated. Through a really great drawing we can enter into an understanding of this change, and must, if we are to appreciate the drawing. A lovely thing in nature, the lovelier the better; a sublime thing in nature, the more sublime the better; drawn by a genius, becomes something more and something less than the original. In the drawing we may see the subtle relationship which exists between the two. We may, often do, care more for the artistic transcript than for the original, in part because, by the help of the transcript, we are enabled to better know the original. The power of art lies in that inner light of the mind which certain men can turn alike upon the microscopic and the titanic presences of nature: Wordsworth into the innermost recesses of an Alpine pass or upon the frailty of a celandine plant; Leonardo da Vinci upon that same celandine or the face of a human being made the acceptable Christ of the "Last Supper"; Corot into the promise and peace of a May orchard; George Innis upon the ripe gorgeousness of an October mountain; Turner upon ocean waves, mountain high, in such a day and place as his "Farne Island" (Frontispiece) shows. Look at any great drawing and you will soon see how, in the turn of a head, the lift of an eye, the bend of an arm, the sweep of a drapery, the branching of a tree, the contour of a mountain, the artist has, in the actual form of the object, and his transcript of it, discovered for himself and you, some secret of surpassing beauty hitherto unrealized.

Fidelity to the model, whatever it may be, first. Next, discovery of hitherto unseen beauty in that model. Next, conscious search among many models for the one in which most of this discovered beauty can be found. Finally, the act of creation, wherein what mitigates against such beauty is omitted, and what of it is present is heightened, in perfect conformity, be sure, with what has already been discovered to exist but to a degree unknown in reality. This is the history of the growth of artistic genius. To learn to recognize these steps in works of art is in large measure the history of the origin and growth of artistic appreciation. It is culture. The drawing of a genius may be slight and abstract, or it may be highly finished and most concrete, but, so far as it goes it will remain faithful to fact, otherwise we could not recognize what has been drawn, the subject. It will, furthermore, and not less faithfully, represent the meaning of the fact as that affects the artist's mind. The drawing of a genius invariably deals with the truthful presentation of fact, and purport of fact; with whatever is, and its meaning, both in the world of nature and in that other world, the artist's mind.

We must always remember that drawing remains drawing though it be called engraving or etching; whether done with pencil upon paper, or needle upon copper, or burin upon steel. And the good qualities of all three alike are the good qualities of drawing. All such engraved or etched drawing, to invent an expression for drawing done with the graver or needle directly upon metal, if done by an artist with his own hand, belongs under the head of original work; that class of work which comes to the world directly from the artist's hand, and between which and the world no other hand and no mechanical instrument intervenes.

We shall have reason, as we proceed, to speak of much fine work; of metal and wood engraving as well as etching and mezzotint, which is not, in the sense just described, original. In other words, engravings or prints copied from masterpieces of painting, sometimes with the master himself standing by, ready to advise and help his imitator; again, when the master's work, the painting, is copied by the engraver, long after the master's hand has ceased from labor, as when today someone engraves a work of Raphael. For these reasons it is convenient to divide all forms of engraving, all prints, into three classes: original work by masters; copied works of masters, but copied under their direct supervision; copied works of masters, but copied without their supervision.

The Beginnings of Line Engraving in Italy

Engraving, cutting lines into, or furrowing them out of a hard substance, such as a slab of stone, a plate of metal, or a block of wood, has been practiced for ages. From the remote past, examples of it have come down to the present. Furthermore, it is employed by men and races but little advanced beyond the savage state. Egyptian sarcophagi, with their incised or engraved hieroglyphics, bear testimony to the former statement, while the bone handles of knives, decorated with crude patterns scratched on them by the inhabitants of the Arctic regions, prove the latter. More than three thousand years before Christ, when an Egyptian monach desired to leave an enduring record of his acts and honors upon earth, he was accustomed to summon to his assistance architects, sculptors and engravers. The first built a tomb, or memorial chapel; the second carved his effigy in stone; the third cut or engraved inscriptions relating to his birth, life and death, prayers for his soul's ease, and lists of his possessions, number of conquests and captives, on slabs of basalt or granite. Of similar character is the lettering upon tombstones, and the ciphering upon spoons and forks. On the stones in signet rings taken from the coffins of Egyptians dead forty centuries, are just such designs as are cut for seals at the present time. Upon ancient Greek royal insignia, gold crowns and pectorals, there is exquisite, engraved scroll ornament: ornament precisely similar, so far as the method of making it goes, to that known as chasing, common now upon watch cases. In Exodus xxviii. 11 we read, "With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel." A partial list would soon grow to be cumbersome as well as wearisome, if enumeration were to be made of the engraved objects of ancient, classic, medieval, and Renaissance date; the sacrificial basins, chalices and monstrances with which the great museums are stored, not to mention references to the engraver's art in literature, from Homer's account of the shield of Achilles to Thackeray's of Beatrice Esmond holding up the great gold salver to her cousin Henry and saying, " 'Isn't this a pretty piece?' as she pointed out the fine carving of the languid prostrate Mars." Most briefly, engraving is carved drawing.

It is worth while in passing to recall the fact that Homer, in his detailed accounts of the subjects imaged on his heroes' shields, says nothing of the process by which the representations were made. But this by no means invalidates what has been said, because from Homer's time

we still possess examples of engraved metal surfaces. Examples of the art are to be seen in the British Museum, or the Metropolitan, dating back to remote antiquity; examples of Assyrian, Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese origin. The reputation of the Anglo-Saxon goldsmiths as engravers, in the days of Alfred and later, is well known. Very soon after the Conqueror's time England developed one use for engraving which she made distinctly her own. In many an ancient English church we may yet see brass grave slabs, full-length "brasses," as they are called, wonderfully engraved with the figures and faces of prelates, and texts from Holy Writ.

The word engrave is derived from ancient roots, appearing in the Greek and Anglo-Saxon, and in our own language in the word 'grave.' Primarily it means a scratch, or an incision. To engrave is to remove—for the present no matter how—portions of the surface of a wood block or a metal plate, so that a design is left either relieved from, or sunken into, the surface. This is dwelt on in order to impress one important fact, and to prepare the way for the statement of another. The first, that engraving, literally the cutting, scratching, or ploughing of a design into the surface of a hard substance, has been common in all ages and conditions of society. The second, that what we think of as engravings, or prints, are none other than impressions, made on sheets of paper by means of filling or covering with ink the lines of the engraved design, and bringing the paper into contact with those lines. Through usage it has become customary to speak of such impressions, prints, the pictures we hang upon our walls, or with which we illustrate our books, as engravings. They are really designs stamped in ink on paper; what the French call *estampe*, and we call prints.

The art of engraving, cutting or incising designs, is of very ancient origin, so ancient that nothing is known of its beginnings. The art of making prints from the surfaces of engraved substances is comparatively modern, probably not known in Europe before the fifteenth century. It is an art of prime importance, because it made possible the reduplication of drawings by men of genius, while out of it sprang the art of printing, to which we owe gratitude for making books and papers our everyday possessions. The exact date and precise authorship of the discovery of a method by which prints could be taken from engraved surfaces are unknown. The honor of having made the discovery is variously claimed

by the Italians, the Germans, and the Dutch. It is possible, perhaps probable, that the discovery was made simultaneously in Italy and Flanders, or in Germany and Italy, an occurrence by no means unheard of in the history of modern invention, even in these days when news of all sorts is spread with incredible rapidity by steam and electricity; surely no matter for wonder in an age when the means of communication between countries were few, slow, and dangerous.

No attempt will be made to discuss the vexed questions which relate to the discovery of the art of printing from engraved surfaces. Dense mists of prejudice, envy, false testimony, and ignorance shroud the facts. It is enough to remember that engravings, prints taken from metal plates, were probably first known in Germany; that engravings, prints taken from wood blocks, were probably of Flemish or German origin; that the art of making prints from engraved wood blocks, what are known as woodcuts, wood engravings, probably preceded the art of making prints from engraved metal plates, what are called steel, copper, or line engravings; that woodcuts were of northern origin, and, in point of time, preceded metal engravings.[1]

Vasari's "Lives of the Painters" remain, what they have ever been, the principal source of literary information concerning art in the days of the Renaissance. Their testimony relating to the first engraver whose name is mentioned is of importance. As this engraver did not die until 1464, and the first edition of Vasari's "Lives" appeared in 1550, in the preface to which the author says that from boyhood he was accustomed to keep notes of all that he heard about the old artists, "concerning whom I held every information most dear," it is possible that Vasari talked about this engraver and his work with those who had known both. Vasari tells us that "the beginning of the practice of copperplate engraving was made by Maso di Finiguerra about 1460," and the essential validity of this statement is not called into doubt by the fact that modern research has succeeded in placing the date as far back as 1440. Vasari does not say that Finiguerra invented the process of copperplate engraving.[2]

[1] "Many words have been wasted by the belligerent critics who have championed the respective claims of Germany, the Netherlands, or Italy for the award of priority in the practice of the art of engraving. Vasari's story that it was due to the Florentine niellist and goldsmith, Maso Finiguerra, about 1460, must, of course, be discarded in view of our present knowledge of the origins of the art in the North, if not also by the existence in Italy itself of engravings which must precede by a decade any that can be attributed to Finiguerra." "A Short History of Engraving and Etching," by A. M. Hind, London, 1908.

[2] "There were engravings in the North of Europe well before the earliest possible example of Finiguerra." "Some Early Italian Engravers before the Time of Marcantonio," by A. M. Hind.

This Finiguerra, like so many of the best of the Italian artists, sculptors, and architects, was apprenticed to a goldsmith and learned the trade of a worker in precious metals under the patronage of one of the famous goldsmiths' guilds,—unions, really, of artists and artisans for mutual protection and the preservation of the highest ideals of the arts they represented. Finiguerra became a master of that branch of the art known as niello, of which Vasari has left us a detailed, though not altogether definite, account. He says that the way to make a work in niello is: *first*, to engrave the design on an even surface of metal with a tool called the burin; *second*, to make a black compound by melting together silver and lead and some other ingredients, which, when cool, is to be ground to a fine powder; *third*, to fill the lines of the engraved design with this powder, which, upon heating, liquifies and runs into every stroke of the design, and there hardens; *lastly*, to rub the work until the true surface appears and everything is polished. Vasari then continues, in a sentence of peculiar significance for our present consideration, saying that of every work which this artist, Finiguerra, engraved on silver preparatory to its completion in niello, "he took an impression on damped paper by making use of some dark pigment mixed with oil, and going over the whole very gently with a round roller, the result being that these pictures not only appear as if printed, but have the effect of those designed (i.e., drawn) with the pen." To repeat what has already been said about being offered, as substitutes for the drawings of Rembrandt and other great artists, engravings by them; being offered in place of a pen drawing by Finiguerra an engraving printed from one of his incised drawings on silver, is to say that such an engraving furnishes an ample and acceptable substitute, which is just what Vasari says at the close of the passage quoted, namely, that "these pictures," prints taken from metal plates engraved for niello, "not only appear as if printed, but have the effect of those designed (i.e., drawn) with the pen." Moreover, this important passage contains one of the very early references to engravings, in the sense of prints, as well as an accurate account of the theory and early practice of printing.

Through chance the goldsmith discovered an easy way, by means of a little ink and a hand roller, to preserve a copy of his design, which, otherwise, was probably lost forever to him when he parted with the object on which he had wrought it; a convenient way of recalling what he had done and sold, and, doubtless, a simple and direct way of making known

to his patrons the character of his work; in other words, a means of advertising his abilities and wares. It is an instance of chance and convenience becoming the parents of a world-serving invention.

We must next know something of the nature of the graver or burin, the tool used in making niello plates in Florence in the fifteenth century, and visiting-card plates the world over in the twentieth, of which Vasari remarks, "with this instrument all things are done which are engraved upon plates of metal." We must have some comprehension of the difficulties which beset a man who wields this tool, and learn how, as is obvious, through the overcoming of these difficulties was developed, in no slight degree, that remarkable skill of hand, keenness of eye, and intellectual appreciation of form, which characterize the best Florentine painting. The burin is a small bar of steel some inches long, square or lozenge-shaped in cross-section, sometimes knife-bladed and sharpened obliquely so as to give cutting point and edges. It is always pushed, never handled like a lead pencil, i.e., dragged or drawn; rather, it is always pushed, like a carpenter's plane or gouge, along the surface of the metal plate, so that it ploughs up a fine shaving of the metal and leaves behind it a small furrow, or incised line, usually triangular in section. To use the burin with skill; to plough the line to the exact depth desired; to curve it, or to keep it straight, according as the design requires; to make it do exactly what it should, needs much strength in the wrist and great precision of touch. It should be borne in mind that ploughing lines into a hard metal surface with a yet harder tool is a very different task from that of drawing with a pen or pencil upon paper. It requires extraordinary delicacy of sight combined with vigor of mind and hand. To be a master of the burin, a first-rate engraver, implies knowing what is to be done, as well as having the power to do it; in a word, being right first, last, and always. Such was the training of the goldsmith in that Florence of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which gave the world the master works of so many arts; for example, that inlaid marble altar, glitteringly arched with mosaic canopy, carried upon carved and twisted marble columns with sharp-cut heads in the full round, and exquisite panels of lowest bas-relief, imbedded in the protecting balustrades of it; while, formerly, upon that altar there reposed a precious mass of sacred utensils, gold and silver ornamented with jewels and niello, and above it rose the tapers that shed their light on one of the lovely madonnas of the early Tuscan school, the shrine in the church

of Or San Michele. Andrea Orcagna, the many-sided man who made this shrine and understood all these arts so well, like a throng of his famous contemporaries and many of his still more famous successors, first learned the goldsmith's trade. Ghirlandajo learned it. So did Botticelli. Vasari says at the beginning of his life of Botticelli; "There was at that time a close connection and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters." We may be sure that this general training of young artists in arts, hedged about by such great manual difficulties as the goldsmith's and niello engraver's, helped, in large degree, to train men for the arts of drawing and painting, arts of comparatively easy technique, the products of which set Italy, and keeps her yet, above the world, by leading men to work with extreme accuracy and delicacy, and in the spirit of truth and beauty; by teaching beginners not to waste materials, or labor, yet to understand that the real value of any work of art is in direct proportion to the thought, love, and labor put into it. The civilized world owes a vast debt of gratitude to those early Italian goldsmiths whose workshops were cradle and nursery of every art; to those trades, beautiful and honest, in which were bred the teachers of Raphael, and Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci, and all the other consummate Italian draughtsmen.

In spite of the fact that for several centuries subsequent to Vasari's death nobody seriously questioned the truth of his statement that it was the custom of niello engravers to take prints from their plates before the lines were filled with permanent black, and although there were many extant prints accepted as impressions from niello plates, the absolute proof necessary to substantiate such a view was lacking. No print was known which was an impression taken from any known work of niello. Until some niello plate could be put side by side with an ink impression taken from it, grounds for doubt would remain. If a print from some design in niello could be discovered, the sides of which were reversed, as the sides of any design printed from an engraved plate must be, as writing is reversed when stamped upon blotting paper, the question would be settled.

A characteristic piece of niello work long attributed to Finiguerra but now to another niellist of the same period, Matteo Dei perhaps, is a pax representing the Assumption (Fig. 10). This pax is a flat piece of silver used in religious ceremonials. It was made for the Florentine church of St. John in the year 1452. By means of this pax the link between engraving, as we at present use the term, and fifteenth-century Italian niello, was estab-

lished by one Abbot Zani. In 1797, he discovered, among the prints in the national collection in Paris, an engraving; a print (Fig. 11) which he recognized as the reverse of the niello design on the St. John pax in Florence. His belief was materially strengthened by the inscription at the top of the composition which reads backwards: "*assumpta est Maria in celum*," read-

Fig. 10. The Pax of St. John, Florence.

ing from right to left, with reversed letters. In order to confirm his belief Zani obtained an exact drawing of the design on the pax and then, by comparing print and drawing, line for line, he found that they were identical, except that the printed design was reversed, as, being printed, it had to be. From the condition of this print, the clear shade and the precision

of its lines; from the fact that it is printed with nearly the same strength of color in all its parts, and because it is nowhere slurred, i.e., printed carelessly, in the sense of slight overlappings here and there, it is extremely probable that the artist had some sort of a press and did not have recourse,

Fig. 11. Print. Pax of St. John, Florence.

in this instance, to the hand roller spoken of by Vasari. Now if the custom of taking prints of this sort had become so general, or ever of so much importance to the chief niello artists of the day as to have led to the invention of the simplest press, and the press in which this engraving was printed, however simple it may have been, was not imperfect, it is but reasonable

to suppose that the art had been practiced for some time previous to Vasari's date of 1460. Facts, as has been said, now establish the validity of this supposition. Vasari might, and with much reason, have considered the art of engraving as unperfected, even undiscovered, before a sure method of printing was devised. Furthermore, the earlier prints made by hand with a roller, or by rubbing, lack the distinctness of line which the press with its evener weight alone insures. Hence, in part, it happens that the very early prints are faint, as well as uneven in color and more or less broken in line, often having a brownish or greenish look, which, however, may be in some measure due to poor ink; poor to begin with, and since faded.

The composition of this "Assumption" (Fig. 11) which includes, within a space scarcely larger than one's hand, above forty heads and nearly half that number of full-length draped figures, and is not confused, will appear more and more remarkable the more it is carefully studied. The central idea of the Virgin enthroned by Christ's side, and in the act of being crowned by Him, is made to dominate the whole design. Secondly, our attention is claimed by the homage and adoration of the saints and martyrs, and all the flower-bearing and trumpeting hosts of heaven. It is a beautiful *drawing*; a beautiful piece of engraved *drawing*. In the British Museum there is a cast which was taken from the same plate, the silver pax, from which the impression, or print, found by Abbot Zani was taken. The taking of such casts from niello plates after the engraving was finished, but before the black enamel had been melted into the lines, was common. It was a means of proving the work; a way of seeing just how the black would look when it should be melted permanently into the engraved metal lines.

The process was simple. The depressed, engraved lines of the metal plate were first filled with a fine clay. After the clay had set, the plate, really a mould, was removed. The design on the plate was left in relief like the pattern on a pat of butter when the stamp is taken off. Melted sulphur was then poured over this clay relief. When the sulphur was hard it formed a cast of the raised clay design, all the original engraved lines of the metal plate being reproduced with accuracy. In other words the artist now had an engraved sulphur plate, a perfect cast of his original metal plate. The depressed lines of this sulphur cast were then filled with black, which done, the artist had his design in black line upon a yellowish surface,

a thing that could be seen clearly; that looked much like a pen drawing or print upon straw-colored paper. This thing might serve him as a memento of his work after he had parted with it. It also gave him a good chance to see what changes might be made to advantage before finishing the actual niello.

We have then, in Paris, in London, and in Florence, the ink print on paper, the sulphur cast, and the silver niello plate; complete and adequate evidence in the case. Finally, this print is the absolute equivalent of an exquisite drawing; as good as the drawing would have been, had the artist made it upon paper with a pen or pencil, instead of on silver with a burin. And thus, practically speaking, do all prints stand to the metal plates from which they are printed. In this niello "Assumption" we have a characteristic example of fifteenth-century Florentine drawing. You may think, upon casual examination, that the fall of the many draperies, and the attitudes of the many figures, were taken from among the infinite number of such things in actual life. But upon longer and close examination it will appear that their peculiar, individual beauty and naturalness are all subdued into relations of order, barring out confusion, and of harmony, barring out uninteresting vacancy in one part of the picture, and disagreeable crowding in another; in different words, we have a design or composition, i.e., an arrangement of parts by human agency, in which the naturalness of nature, so far as the parts go, has been zealously adhered to, but into which clarity, and grace, and the supreme beauty of rhythmic order have been introduced by art; in fine, a work of art. In this drawing, really print, are exhibited the divine power of the human mind for selecting whatever best serves the content of beauty, and its not less divine power of giving order to those few details which have been selected from the infinitude of natural detail. Nature has been copied with fidelity of imitation, as she always was by the great Italians, especially in their drawings, but combining these imitated details into a pleasing and lovely whole implies the artist's fidelity to principles which are *not* in nature. This is the essence of art, the sole source of which is the mind of man. Here witnesseth the artistic power of invention, or creation, the beginning of which is a fiery zeal for the expression of exact truth to fact, and the end of which is a man-created harmony, at best a heavenly harmony. In great art the real and the reasonable are never forgotten or lost sight of. The tremendous fact, and in this fact lies all the good of great art to man, is that the ideal

is made visible and set forever within our reach. Good drawing, in the usual sense of accurate representation, faithful and truthful rendering of the forms and shapes of physical objects, is the first essential; the essential which ensures respectability to a work of art. And then comes the second essential, that which raises, and alone can raise, the respectable to the great—the quality of thought, creative, powerful, illuminating, which is begot in the artist's mind and is given body in the artist's work;—the rare, unique, and individual quality of *his* thought about *his* chosen subject, given visible and individualistic expression so that all men may share it; in a word, *his* personality, *his* style.

For a moment let us return to the more practical consideration of the niello plate itself and the process of its making. Think of the design on the silver pax as not so very different from the print; that the original is a small drawing in black line on a silver ground which differs from paper only in being more highly polished. Then think of it in respect to its technique, as a drawing, but one made under a thousand-fold more difficult conditions than any to which we are accustomed, because each line had to be ploughed out of the silver with a burin instead of drawn on a sheet of paper with a pencil. Finally, think of this small print as the early monument of an art which made the designs of the best goldsmiths in Italy accessible to the goldsmiths of the transalpine nations, and *vice versa;* accordingly of its influence as an agent for spreading knowledge and pleasure. Remember, further, that through the development of *this* art, men became possessed alike of a new art, and a capital means of disseminating, broadcast, knowledge and enjoyment of the best drawing. So thinking and remembering, we must recognize in the art of the engraver an agent for the advancement of culture, and in its inventor, whoever he may have been, a world's benefactor.

As an artistic technician, as well as a great artist, and as one who expressed certain ideas of an important epoch in the history of culture, the Italian painter, Sandro Botticelli, with his sweet coloring and quaint conceits of subject and treatment of subject, appeared with the dawn of the modern world. His pictures bear witness to the advance which had been made on the purely technical side of art, since the days of its infancy and Giotto, and point directly to those of its maturity and Raphael. Their subjects announce the return of classical learning, then beginning to reillumine the world. They declare the era of the restoration of the

poetry and philosophy of Greece. They mark the beginnings of all that the term Renaissanee implies; all that the humanities stand for. Botticelli painted the Christ and the Virgin of Christianity, or Spring, as described by the Latin poet, Lucretius, with equal delight and interest. This variety of choice marks him as a true child of the Renaissance; as a humanist and a modern, in opposition to a medieval, an ecclesiast and an

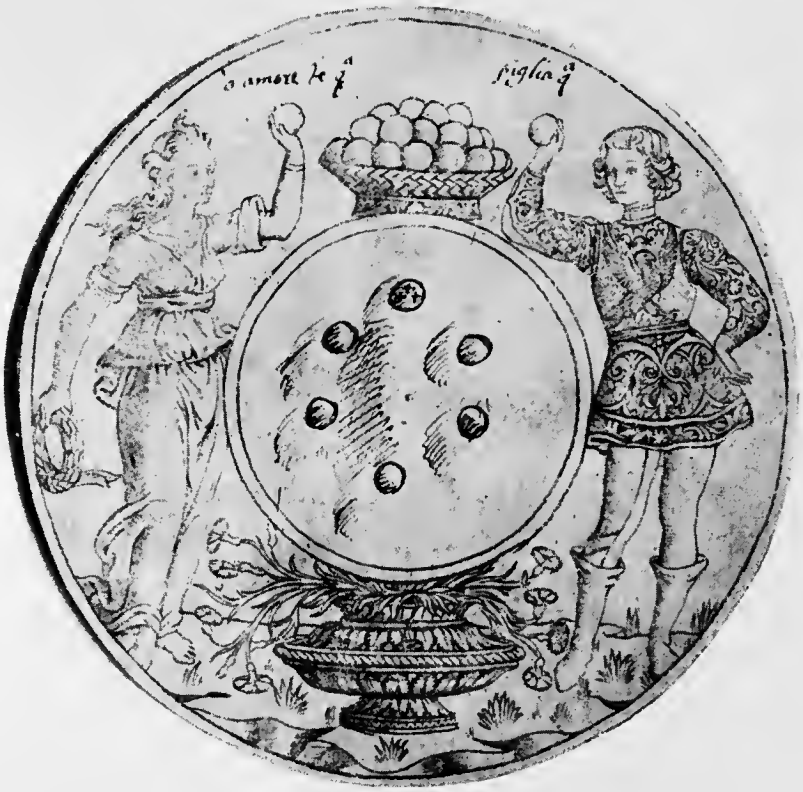


Fig. 12. Otto Print. Anonymous early Florentine engraver.

ascetic. In his life of Botticelli, Vasari says that "being a person of novel pursuits he commented on Dante and designed, i.e., made drawings for, and engraved the "Inferno," about which work he consumed a great deal of time. He likewise engraved a great many other things from designs which he had made, but in an indifferent manner, beeause he had but little skill in the management of the burin." On the other hand, Vasari makes no mention of Bottieelli in that chapter which he devotes to the engravers,

wherein, after the notice of Finiguerra, he gives a brief account of another engraver, who was, in his opinion, of next importance. He says: "Finiguerra was followed by Baccio Baldini, a Florentine goldsmith who, not being a very skillful designer, engraved all that he did from the inventions and designs of Sandro Botticelli." What Vasari says amounts to this: 'Botticelli designed well and engraved poorly; Baldini engraved well and designed poorly.' Moreover, there is a considerable number of well-designed and fairly well-engraved subjects which are variously attributed to Botticelli and Baldini, the authorities not agreeing as to the exact part which either of them took in the work. It is improbable, however, with all the pictures which Botticelli painted that he could have found time to engrave extensively, and there is good reason to doubt his having had time to design all that Baldini is credited with as engraver. This is not the place for a discussion of the much vexed question which deals with Botticelli and Baldini. It is, however, the place for a brief consideration of the works engraved by what may be called the Botticelli–Baldini group.

The well-known circular print (Fig. 12), representing a young man and a young woman as supporters to a circular shield, is ascribed by Ottley[1] to Baldini. The balls on the inner circle, and the words above the heads of the figures, are scratched in with a pen and have no connection with the engraving. The design may have been worked in niello on the top of a silver box. While it is characteristic of the fifteenth century, it lacks the unique grace which pervades Botticelli's usual treatment, that of his wonderful Dante drawings, for example. In execution it is very dry and hard, though very delicate.[2] This print is probably a proof taken from a work prepared for niello. It is clearly printed, but somewhat faint in color, and was, perhaps, done by hand with a roller. In technical quality, as in design, it is much inferior to the St. John pax print already discussed.

Another print of this period is the design on the title page (Fig. 13) of a very interesting book, a sacred work entitled "Il Monte Sancto di Dio"—"The Holy Hill of God"—printed at Florence in 1477, and commonly regarded as one of the first books, perhaps the first, to be illustrated with copperplate engravings. The three full-page illustrations of the "Monte Sancto di Dio" have been much discussed as to their authorship.

[1] "Inquiry into the Origin and Early History of Engraving," by W. Y. Ottley.

[2] It is one of the so-called "Otto Prints"; Otto, because the majority of the series of which this is one was owned by an eighteenth-century collector of that name.

In a notice of the fine copy belonging to the British Museum, the handbook[1] says, "Whether they were engraved by Baldini or Botticelli is a point which perhaps will never be settled." The subjects are "The Glory of Paradise," "The Misery of Hell," and "The Mount of Christ." The

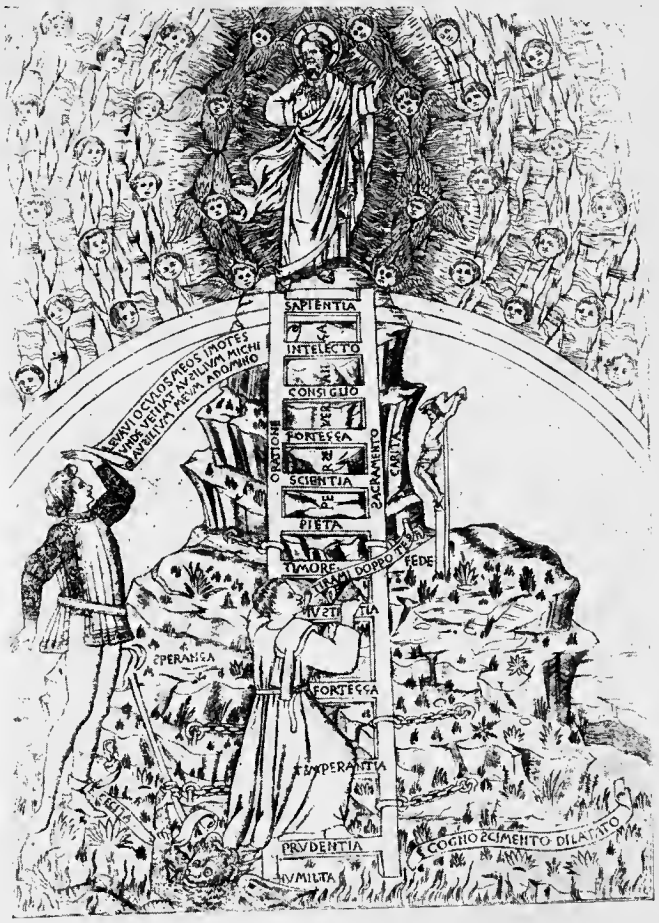


Fig. 13. The Holy Mountain. Anon. Florentine Engraver.

figure of a youth, rather lifeless, and clad in a tunic of eminently beautiful fifteenth-century Florentine design, is represented as standing at the foot of a mountain, the height of which is compassed by a ladder. The rungs are variously labeled, Prudence, Temperance, Strength, Justice, Rever-

[1] "A Handbook to the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum," by Louis Fagan.

ence, Piety, Knowledge, Fortitude, Counsel, Intelligence, and Wisdom, while the uprights of the ladder are marked Prayer and Sacrament. At the top stands Christ, surrounded by angels and cherubim. A demon holds the youth, bound by his left ankle, while near by on the ground one reads the word "Hope," and above his upturned eyes there is a scroll bearing these words of the 121st Psalm: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord." As a design this is inferior to the "Assumption" (Fig. 11) on the St. John pax, but it is superior to the circular print (Fig. 12) ascribed to Baldini. It contains much that is charming as well as interesting, apart from the expression of lingering medieval allegory, at this time, 1477, giving way to reviving paganism. One point of great technical interest should be noticed. The words on the scroll, and those on the ground, and the scarf by which the youth is bound, are printed in their proper direction, reading from left to right, which shows that this plate must have been engraved with especial reference to printing, which of course it was, and places it in an entirely different class from that of a niello work like the pax of St. John. In all of this early Italian engraving the outline was clearly the chief concern of the artist. When he did make use of shade or shadow he jealously guarded the outline from all encroachments. In none of this work is there anything approaching a full treatment of light and shade.

We now come to a set of famous prints, not, however, as drawings, to be placed on the high level of downright excellence; those for Dante's "Inferno," by some ascribed to Botticelli. As a rule the idea to be conveyed far outstrips, in beauty and importance, the means of its conveyance. What the best drawing, drawing intended as an end in itself, of this period was like we shall see at a glance upon looking at Botticelli's silver-point and pen-traced designs (Fig. 16) for the "Divine Comedy"; drawings that open the eyes with sheer amazement, so surpassing are their mastery and charm, but not so any of the engraved drawing of the time, and, least of all, these famous so-called Botticelli illustrations for the "Inferno." This set of small engravings, twenty in number, was made to furnish head-pieces for the first nineteen Cantos of the "Inferno." They appear in the edition printed at Florence in 1481. They are illustrations in the truest sense, because they do, in a straightforward manner, illuminate and make clear, in the medium of drawing, of line, the simple, exact, and wonderfully concrete statements of the text. They are not the

Fig. 14. Dante's Divine Comedy, 1481.

more or less unrelated fancies of the sort the so-called, but second-rate, illustrator makes, in whose mind the text conjures up pictures, worth while they may be as pictures, but not as illustrations, i.e., pictures bearing directly upon the text. For example, the print made for Canto XII (Fig. 14) shows the Minotaur, a vile animal perfectly defined by Hawthorne as "an enemy of his fellow creatures and separated from all good companionship," on discovering Dante and Virgil and finding himself unable to harm them turning upon and rending himself. Dante says, "And when he saw us he bit himself as one whom wrath rends inwardly." Thus he appears in the upper left-hand corner of the plate, with Dante and his guide looking on in horrified amazement. Again, in the center of the same plate, Virgil and Dante are shown on the margin of the river of blood, in which are the murderers; "in which," says the poet, "boils whoso doth harm to others by violence, crying, 'O blind cupidity, both guilty and mad, that so spurs us in the brief life, and then in the eternal sleeps us so ill.'" The centaurs are shown on the river banks, armed, "as in the world they were used to go to the chase." It is their duty to shoot down the murderers when they show their heads above the boiling crimson stream. Finally, at the right-hand side, Dante appears for a third time. He is

mounted on the back of a centaur and is being carried and instructed according to the commands of Chiron, the chief centaur, who makes known his discovery that Dante is flesh, and not a spirit, in the words addressed to his companion, "Are ye aware that he moves what he touches?" The other engravings are equally good, considered as illustrations of the immortal text. But it is for this and not for their technique, or as drawings, that they are famous. They consist of distinct outline and very simple crosshatched shade. Their brownish and faint color, and a look which in places almost suggests blotting, have led some to believe them the result of hand printing, a belief scarcely tenable. But whenever and wherever poor printing appears there is a striking proof, negative though it be, to the credit which a good printer, one who has a keen eye and a sure touch, deserves; testimony to the value of good printing; a justification of Hamerton's memorable remark about the famous English printer of etchings, Golding, who he said had "the eye of an artist and the hand of a duchess." But this bears upon the subject of the press, and the relation of printed pictures to printed letters, what is called letter-press, rather than upon engraving as such.

Mention has been made of Botticelli's drawings (Fig. 16) intended as illustrations for the "Divine Comedy" in distinction from the engravings to the "Inferno." As such, each one of these drawings possesses the vital characteristics of good illustrations at all times and everywhere. These characteristics have been described, and it has been pointed out that because they possess these characteristics the so-called Dante engravings are unusual. But while they do not always adhere closely to Botticelli's known authentic drawings, they do, none the less, adhere closely enough to make it certain that the engraver, whoever he may have been, had the Botticelli drawings constantly before him as models. They are, however, compared with the actual drawings, utterly inferior. The engravings are interesting from the standpoint of engraving rather than as works of art. It would be unfair to compare the two, for the drawings are among the very greatest things of art, absolutely without regard to time, place, or nationality. They cannot be studied too attentively by any one sincerely wishing to learn what consummate drawing means, or desiring to share in the delights which such drawing offers to all who understand it.

It may be granted without argument that Botticelli's drawing has certain stylistic attributes which give to it a fixed sameness. To take

this sameness for a blemish is to fail to recognize one of the most characteristic features of Botticelli's unparalleled genius for expression. By stylistic attributes are meant, for example, that type of head which is never to be taken for the work of any other artist. The same is true of his draperies, with their peculiar sense of fresh breeziness. There is about his every line and touch a breath as of the spring, the springtime of the world as well as of individual lives and seasons; a breath of promise rather than fulfillment; promise and fulfillment of the eternal beauties of which the beauties of this world give but shadowy hints. And once having found a satisfactory means for suggesting his ideas he then sticks to those means. They become his stylistic attributes. For example, a certain melancholy cast of features, due, in large part, to the fact that the eyelids are drawn with an invariable droop, suggestive of heaviness, as if in the sweet act of waking. Again, his draperies are intricately convoluted, and the lines which depict their convolutions are almost always sharply hooked, hooks and convolutions being always the same. Or, still again, his lips are fuller than ordinary and his chins more pointed. Over and over again Botticelli uses these means or attributes. They are stylistic because preëminently his own and not another's, in precisely the same way that Dante in his writing makes use of analogous stylistic attributes which he never changes. For instance, Dante uses the same formula, so to speak, over and over again when he wishes to set all his readers to thinking of a given subject, but leaves each one of them to think of it with such degree of force as his individual nature will allow. Thus, when he describes Cato in the first book of "Purgatory," he says, an old man "in aspect worthy of so much reverence that no son owes more to his father." To the reverence which all sons owe to their fathers Dante calls the attention of the whole vast army of his readers, present and to come. To each individual of that army he then leaves the settling of the degree of reverence due Cato by compelling the individual to decide upon the reverence which he owes his own father, in every case less than that owed Cato. Instead of producing a tiresome, hence unnatural, sense of weariness and repetition, this fixed mode of artistic procedure gives the artist, whether he be draughtsman like Botticelli, or builder of word structures like Dante, his greatest opportunity for expression, by allowing him to make endless slight variation in the application of his constant formula as he applies it to his theme, whether it be mankind or

nature; each, in his class, one of that class; each, in his variation, an individual.

It has not been sufficiently remarked, if at all, by the students of Botticelli that his drawing is of the medieval time distinctly, and not of the Renaissance; and, so too, his coloring, but not his ideas. His own, we mean; i.e., his ideas concerning a classic subject such as "Venus Rising from the Sea" in contradistinction to his expression of Dante's ideas, as he depicts them in line for illuminating, making plainer, in a word, illustrating Dante's words. And here again is proof of his consummate power

Fig. 15. Drawing by Villars de Honnecourt.

as a truthful illustrator. It is a fact that Botticelli's figure drawings are close kin to the figures of medieval French sculpture; the same is true of his drawings of the things of nature, trees and plants. But as we are not used to medieval drawing, and as it is difficult at best to see the basic similarities between actual sculpture and drawing, even when they are contemporary, we shall do well to have recourse to a bit of medieval drawing to enforce, if not to prove, the point in question. It will not take long looking at a typical figure (Fig. 15) from the sketch-book of Villars de Honnecourt when set beside a figure out of Botticelli's Dante drawings (Fig. 16) to see that they are stylistically and technically identical despite

Fig. 16. Drawing by Botticelli. Dante's Divine Comedy.

the fact that the former is much inferior to the latter. The same of a bit of Villars's plant drawing beside the mystical flowers and leaves which Botticelli drew for Dante's "Paradiso"; the flowers from which the souls of the just, made perfect, were seen by Dante to rise and return as bees out of the hearts of the blossoms of earth. But, as is always the case with works of transcendent art, no matter how mystical or how idealistic, these drawings by Botticelli have an elemental existence in the recognizable realities of this world. William Blake belongs in the same class of draughtsmen, to cite its single modern member. It is not probable that any man ever drew trees in what may be called the specific abstract manner with more entire genius than Botticelli in his illustrations for Canto XXVIII of the "Purgatory" (Fig. 16). Look at the root-growth branches, and at the foliage of countable touches yet so suggestive of the universal in that it is so true to all specific foliage. *This* is the specific abstract manner and it is the manner of all truly great artists. Look also at the grass, placed where it is for its own sake, i.e., recognizably drawn, and for the sake of making clear just where the stream edge is. To the extreme left, entering this forest of

the Earthly Paradise, we see Virgil, Statius, and Dante. Again, in the middle left, we see them just as they reach the border of the strangest, loveliest, and most real of rivers as Dante pictures it. Dante, looking across the stream, in the right distance sees Matilda gathering flowers on the further bank. Finally, to the middle right, hearing and heeding Dante's call, Matilda comes so that he may see her near by. The loveliness of

Fig. 17. Parnassus. Claude Lorrain.

nature and the possible dignity of man, together with the innocence and joy of the sinless state in Eden, are here bodied forth in a composition which foretells Raphael's Parnassus, the Parnassus of Claude (Fig. 17), and the best of Puvis de Chavannes, but is essentially, poetically, the superior of all three; a work, as illustrative of a given text, consummate, and, *per se*, i.e., as a drawing, not less consummate; the sort of drawing which no Italian engraver ever did, and least of all that Baldini whose name Vasari

Fig. 18. Assumption of the Virgin. Anon. Florentine Engraver (15th century).

has coupled inseparably with Botticelli's but whose work, interesting and important as it is, has not the faintest touch of the simplicity which is sublime; the simplicity which stamps with immortality such work as Botticelli's Dante drawings and the equally great and strangely similar drawings made by William Blake for the "Book of Job."

More closely resembling the style of Botticelli's drawing and composition, yet far inferior to either, are some large Florentine engravings of anonymous authorship, among them the "Assumption of the Virgin" (Fig. 18). In every respect this truly fine print, the best of the group, noble in the disposition of its masses, dramatic in its action, and affectionate in the treatment of every detail, suggests the unique Florentine master though falling, as has been said, far short of the works in pencil and oil by which he stands as a known and, Blake excepted, certainly unique quantity in the world of art. Beside this "Assumption" the "Monte Sancto di Dio" (Fig. 13) engravings are crude, as beside the actual silver-point, pen-touched drawings of Botticelli (Fig. 16) this "Assumption" is in its turn crude.

CHAPTER III.

THE BEGINNINGS OF LINE ENGRAVING AND WOOD IN THE NORTH

IT has already been said that wood engraving, in point of time, probably preceded metal engraving, and that wood engraving was of northern origin. About this subject, as about the invention and origin of metal engraving, there has been much argument and dispute. Let us pass the matter by, regarding it as sufficient for the present purpose if we add that there is reason for believing that the Chinese practiced the art of wood engraving at a very early date, and that there is some reason for thinking that the art was known in Italy as early as the thirteenth century; that possibly it was brought to Italy from the East. There is a woodcut of German or Flemish manufacture, a St. Christopher (Fig. 20), bearing the date 1423, and one, "long believed," as Hamerton says, "the Adam of all our woodcuts." This Adam, like the real Adam, has been called into question by modern research which accepts no extant woodcut as earlier than 1450, i.e., to which a date can be certainly ascribed. That some extant woodcuts are of earlier date than 1450 is not to be doubted. A decree of the Venetian Senate in 1441 forbade the importation of foreign printed pictures and cards. But of such woodcuts there are no authentically dated examples.

So much of the history and origins of art as has been made out to the present time tends to prove that in their beginnings the arts, speaking generally, were in very close relation to one another. It is in the course of their later development that they appear to diverge, and in the periods of their greatest accomplishment that they appear to differ most. And yet, in such periods of artistic development also, again generally speaking, the relations of art to art are very intimate and close although they may seem remote. This seeming so is largely due to our imperfect understand-

ing of the highly finished products of art as compared with our comprehension of the earlier and less developed products. The drawing of primitive ages and that of the great men of times renowned for the excellence of artistic production bear closer resemblance to each other than the best painting of primitive ages and that of times renowned for their development of this particular art. And, as has been said, it is often much easier to get at an artist's intentions, his fundamental ways of looking, and thinking, through his drawings than through his finished pictures, the very complexity of which not infrequently, for a time at least, defeats our understanding of them. In all good drawing, primitive or the reverse, a faithful transcript of fact is the prime aim of the artist. In other words, the ruling passion is for faithful, highly accurate likenesses, no matter what the subject. This the artist recognizes as the first requirement put upon him if he is to be understood; if his subject is to be recognized. In short, he must, if he is to be understood, speak in terms of a familiar and common language, which terms, in graphic art, i.e., the picture art, are the universally known and recognizable shapes of all objects, animate and inanimate. To tell us what he thinks about these objects; to make us see how he has been moved or inspired in the presence of these objects, any, it may be many or few of them; to lift us, who look at his pictures of these objects, to his level of comprehension and make us, through his works, possible sharers in his more intense and extensive participation in the realms of understanding and emotion; to do these things, and more, is the artist's peculiar privilege and splendid duty. It is thus that he increases the world's stock of reverence by adding to the stock of those things which men, as individuals, hold in reverence when once they discover them. This means discovering new sublimities and beauties in life and in nature, to do which is the be-all and end-all of art. In a word,

> "To burst through nature's portals, from the crowd
> With jealous caution closed;"

to make "the crowd" joint partners in what is discovered, by making "the crowd" understand and appreciate what it could not for itself have discovered or entered into.

Desire for faithful likeness, no matter what the subject, urges an artist toward accurate imitation of his model, and leads him to make the effort to solve germane problems such as foreshortening and perspective, as well

as to become master of his tools and materials, pencils and paper, brushes and canvas, copper plate, burin, and needle. These and similar concerns alike occupy the artistic mind in the beginnings of an individual's practice, or in the early youth of a people's art. Artist, or art, works from the particular to the general, during an individual life or a period, if the life be really vital, or the period truly distinguished. Art, practiced by able men in great days, such for example as those of Pericles or Pope Julius II, is the never-to-be-doubted and never-failing witness of lucid thought seeking to find correspondingly lucid forms of expression. All great art is, as Shelley knew well when he wrote "Hellas," "based on the crystalline sea of thought and its eternity." It is then, and then only, that art rises from the particular to the general, becoming abstract and universal while it continues to be concrete; universal and abstract in its personal declarations about significance; concrete and particular in its portrayal of the facts which are the vehicles of significance to others. Thus it happens that archaic Greek sculpture, looked on *en masse*, is, in many respects, childish, while, in the most archaic examples of this sculpture, there is an expression of evident desire for likeness of parts though portraiture of the whole was beyond the sculptor's reach. As we compare earlier Greek sculpture with later we discover ever increasing ability in respect to portraiture of the whole, together with better and better technique, but when we come to the marbles which mark the culmination of Greek art in the person of Phidias we find the tendency to restricted imitation of the particular, or individual, disregarded, and that the carver in those consummate masterpieces of genius, which are, *par excellence*, classic art, has so refined upon the universal type as to put individual life into what is the image of no individual form; in other words, that he has reached that general which is the ideal. A parallel instance is to be found in the sculpture and painting of the Italian Renaissance, in the work of Nicolas of Pisa, Donatello, and Raphael.

The same will be found to hold true of early and later Italian engraving, merely another, though more difficult, method of drawing, as has been insisted upon. From one point of view, engraving, in technique at least, is nearer to sculpture than to ordinary drawing or painting, which latter is, after all, nothing more than simple drawing of outline to which light, and shade, and color have been added, but added with the brush, which is an instrument as easy of manipulation almost as the pencil; in point of ease

almost as far removed from the burin, as the burin is from the pencil or the pen. Far too little attention is generally given to the really close relation which exists between sculpture and drawing. They are both primarily arts of form, one, dealing with form, the defining of form in solid material; the other, with defining shape as representing form in solid material, on flat surfaces. Sculpture is an art of three and drawing an art of two dimensions; but they are fundamentally one in that they both depend, first of all, upon outline, i.e., on bounding definition of contours. If we can imagine a man, analogous to a sculptured figure in the full round, moving backward, first against, and then into the wall, until his form is half concealed, we have the condition of bas-relief sculpture. Further, imagine him as passing through the wall and leaving a clean-cut hole of his exact shape. The contour of the hole is an outline in a single plane, or on a flat surface if we but choose so to think of it. Now think of a sheet of paper on which this outline is traced, the exact counterpart of the hole, and you have an outline drawing of the man or sculptured figure in full round. If we add light and shade to this outline we get the appearance of solidity, a drawing in chiaroscuro. It is of course to be remembered that these two arts are governed by different conventions, but it should be recognized nevertheless that they go back to identical beginnings. In this connection there is another important point too often overlooked; a point which, in part, and no small part, accounts for the differences and wide separation between Italian art on the one hand, and German or Flemish on the other; between the drawing, hence the engraving, of these peoples; namely, the artistic traditions and inheritances which an artist, school of artists, or a nation receives or lacks. Consider what, in these respects, was the difference between the Italians and the peoples of the North of France, Germany, Flanders, and England when the Renaissance began to dawn; when the better days of the eleventh century drew on to the great awakening of all that art and letters implied in the history and the life of culture of latter-day medievalism and the Renaissance. Tradition and inheritances, with nations, as with individuals, are blessings from which the element of potential harm is never absent. In other words, they may work for evil as well as good.

The tradition of Greek art, and of Roman, the lineal descendant of Greek, lasted well into the Middle Ages—greatly impaired, it is true—and was present, a potent presence, at the revival. It became sponsor for

the arts and letters of the Renaissance. Along with these indestructible traditions of the artistic greatness of the past, of those men who were the forebears of the Italians, and of whom the Italians were and are so justly proud, came also a vast legacy of actual works of art, paintings, mosaics, metal objects, and sculpture, not to name literature and architecture. And in all of these arts the Italian artist of the earliest days of the Renaissance recognized two characteristics notably wanting in his own works at that time—characteristics absolutely vital to all great art—truthful representation of the facts of nature, together with a far better technique than was then displayed in any contemporary work. Beyond this they dimly recognized, in the ancient things of Rome, the quality of abstract and generalized beauty which characterized, more than all else, the classical and ideal treatment of life and nature particularly in Greek art. Art that had shut itself in from the world and been frozen by rule and canon, with the result that it had become largely a matter of repetition, vain repetition, and moribund, now broke its bounds, and, in doing so, as Browning says, found "soaring room." This is the vital purport of the Renaissance. The first aim of the artist was to make his drawing look real in the sense of being true to life; the final goal of the artist was to keep his drawing, his pictures, real and lifelike, yet add to them the quality of the ideal, in appearance, and of design or pattern, in construction. In short, he took his art to nature, "the mistress of all high intelligences," while he set up the splendid things of Greek and Latin days as models of technical perfection and beauty. And the final result was the art of the Renaissance, culminatingly personified by Titian, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Doing these two things, and being possessed of gigantic intellects and imaginations, it is no wonder these men reached the heights they did; heights which have invariably, compared with the utmost reaches of every subsequent generation, appeared, in exaltation, as the eagle when he soars aloft over the highest peak. The Italians, in the fostering presence of the antique, perceived that great art implied much more than the mere copying of nature. The French, Germans, and Flemish, on the other hand, true lovers of nature, when they made their earliest essays at art in the northern lands, lacked such tradition altogether, and, accordingly, any inherited conceptions of abstract beauty. Hence we shall search in vain through their works for that especial

character which we call the antique or classic.[1] German and Flemish art furnishes splendid illustration of the minute and reverent regard for exact likeness of all that the world contained for the sturdy northern artist. Much of it is homely, but none of it is dull, and even that which at first appears exceedingly crude will often, upon examination, be found to contain elements human and lovely in very high degree. Italian art on the one hand, and French, German, and Flemish art on the other, neither in their infancy nor in their maturity, are to be compared, but they are to be studied with absolute certainty of inspiration by liberal-minded people in search of that culture which implies an understanding and appreciation of art in general as well as in particular. We should remember that together they form our inheritance, and that this implies for us, as heirs, certain obligations; above all, the obligation of understanding, hence appreciating.

The nature of the materials employed in the art of engraving, and the corresponding influence upon the character of the results, is a matter of vital import in connection with this, as it is with all other arts. We know, for example, how rugged and even crude the sculptures of the Sicilian Greek temples appear when compared with those of Athens, and many persons think this is so, and naturally so, because the Sicilian Greek sculptors belonged to an earlier period than those of Attica. But had the fact that the Sicilians often carved a coarse-grained volcanic stone, while the Greek carved the finest quality of marble, nothing to do with the widely differing results? Of course it had, for every one knows how on one sort of stone the finest edge and most polished surface can be put, while, on another, blunt edges and uneven surfaces are the extreme accomplishment within the power of the ablest workman. The true artist respects the integrity of the material and tool with which he is working, by not attempting to get results technically excellent beyond what is compatible with the limitations which such materials and tools establish. The sculptor will not try, even though by reason of extraordinary skill he can in a measure do so, to give the refinement appropriate for Parian marble and ivory to rough-grained sandstone and chalk. Just so the engraver of wood, which is a coarse-grained material compared with silver or copper, will not attempt to make lines like those which he would cut on metal, if he be a real artist; such an artist as were the great German

[1] There are citable exceptions, but not a body of exceptions sufficient to invalidate the rule.

and Flemish engravers. This is a point which calls for emphasis. The German and Flemish wood engravings with their heavy lines are not necessarily inferior to metal engravings with their exquisite fine strokes because in one the work is heavy and in the other delicate. The theory and process of wood engraving differ radically from the theory and process of metal engraving, because in wood engraving the design is made to stand up; in other words, the design is left in relief by cutting away the surrounding surface. To take a print from a wood block, those parts of the block left in relief, the design or drawing, are inked. The principle is the same as that of an ordinary rubber stamp. Upon bringing this inked design or drawing, the relief, into contact with a sheet of paper, it, i.e., the design or drawing, is at once transferred to the paper, perfect but reversed. Those parts of the block which have been cut away in order to leave the raised design naturally have no effect upon the paper during the process of printing. In other words, the portions of the block which have been cut away are represented by untouched white paper, while the portions left, i.e., the design or drawing, are represented by black ink lines.

To print a metal plate, the lines, the incisions that form the design or subject, are filled with ink, after which all superfluous ink is wiped from the surface of the plate. It is the lines which print black, while all those parts of the real or original surface of the plate which come into contact with the paper leave clean, uninked spaces. To put it in a different way, and this is a most important technical distinction, one on which depends the whole difference between wood and metal engraving, wood engraving is relief engraving, whereas metal engraving is incised engraving; woodcuts are printed from the surface, whereas metal engravings are printed from the incisions.

The favorite wood for the engraver's purpose was pear tree, but during the eighteenth century the use of boxwood became common, the essential quality being a close, fine grain. A plank was often used; i.e., the design was cut with, rather than across, the grain, as in later times became almost universal. It is obvious that a design cut with the grain cannot contain lines of such fine character as those in a design cut across the grain. Moreover, it is plain that the design cut with the grain cannot stand as much force, or weight in the printing press, as that cut across the grain. In the earliest examples of the art the printing was done by hand, the inked block being used much as we use a stamp, by rubbing, whereas

nielli, and metal engravings generally, were printed with a roller pressed down upon the paper. Rubbing, however, was not uncommon in printing the early Florentine engravings. It is the difference in these processes, and the greater simplicity of the former, which accounts in part for the fact that, as a rule, very early wood engravings are more clearly and blackly printed than very early metal engravings. Such primitive processes, and the faults attendant upon them, were soon done away with by the development of specially constructed printing presses. The differences in pressure exerted by these presses, comparatively light when printing from a wood block and very heavy when printing from the incised line of the metal plate, gave rise to the plate mark; that sinking in the paper round about the printed design in the case of a metal engraving. The plate mark[1] is the actual mark of the metal plate caused by the great weight placed on the paper, sufficient to force it down upon the incised lines of the metal plate and so draw out all the ink in them, such a pressure as might crush the raised design on a wood block.

The wood engraver, when he had found a block of the right size and quality, proceeded to place his design upon it, either drawing it directly upon the block with pen or pencil, or tracing it, and thus getting it upon the block in reverse position, or, in some instances, securely gluing the design, drawn first upon thin paper, directly to the surface of the block. He then cut away all those parts of the surface of his block not actually covered by the lines of his design, so that the finished block should have the design left standing in relief. A serious difficulty which beset the wood engraver was the cutting, or clearing out, of the numberless little rectangular spaces produced by the crossing of one line with another, crosshatchings, necessary of course where complex effects of light and shade are required. It will be seen that what the metal engraver could do with a single push of his burin, and the draughtsman with a single stroke of his pen or pencil, became a matter of infinite painstaking and care on the part of the wood engraver,—the cutting out of each lozenge-shaped bit of wood in order to leave, in relief, a lattice-like arrangement

[1] That metal engravings, and particularly very old ones, often show no plate mark is not to be taken as proof that there never was one. As prints pass from one generation of owners to another small tears are apt to occur. In order to prevent their going in further, a sufficient amount of the margin of the print will be trimmed off. As time goes on, and wear increases, and this process of trimming is repeated, the print is likely to be cut down to the actual subject, and appear, as so many of the early Italian, German, and Flemish prints do appear, entirely without plate mark or margin of any sort. There are Dürer prints extant which have wide margins and plate marks.

of lines which should, in printing, give crossed lines. For this reason we shall find, what we might expect, little shade in early woodcuts, in other words, crosshatching; though when it was necessary the woodcutters of Germany and Flanders exhibited remarkable skill in producing it. In the majority of instances, the shadows, shades, and backgrounds, even in the wood engravings of Holbein and Dürer (Fig. 32), are produced by a series of parallel lines, parallel hatchings, broad and near together when much darkness is needed; thin and far apart when little is required. As a matter of fact, the shadows, shades, and backgrounds of the woodcuts of the time of Holbein and Dürer are made up of lines arranged in a manner resembling that of the greater number of early line engravers upon metal, these latter, especially the Italians, appearing, as a rule, either to have

Fig. 19. St. John, Criblé. Anon. German engraver (15th century).

preferred the simple uncrossed lines, or to have been partially unconscious of the fact that their material, metal, and tool, burin, would lend themselves easily to the most intricate crosshatching. This is an illustration of what was said earlier, that the arts in their infancy appear to be in closer relationship to one another than in times of their maturity.

The theory and the practice of wood engraving, as already described, apply, in some measure, to such curious early prints with dotted or speckled shading and background as this St. John. It is by an anonymous fifteenth-century engraver. The peculiar method employed in such prints is known as *criblé*, which means 'dotted'; literally, filled or covered with small holes. It is a form of metal engraving. A soft metal was used, generally some alloy resembling pewter. The process was first to cut the main lines of the design into the plate and then, by means of punches of varying diam-

eters and shapes, to punch out, or crowd back the surface of the plate in such a way as to leave the design in relief. The printing was the same as usual with wood blocks, the raised parts printing black, and the depressed not printing at all, i.e., leaving white paper. This cut is a work of art,[1]

Fig. 20. St. Christopher. Anon. engraver (15th century).

[1] The idea, however, of such a method is the opposite of that underlying both metal and wood engraving in that the *criblé* engraver thought of his design as white, white lines and white dots on a black ground, whereas the wood and metal engravers thought of their designs as black lines on a white ground. "The use of the white line is the essential element in the process. These prints should be described as white line engravings for relief printing, and occupy an intermediate position between line-engravings and wood cuts." Campbell Dodgson. See "White-line Engraving for Relief-printing in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries." Report of National Museum for 1890, pages 385-394, Washington, 1892.

like others of its sort, curious, rather than beautiful; interesting mainly because of its early date, and as illustrating a long disused method. In no sense is it a masterpiece. This rude method soon fell into disuse. Except in rare instances, such as the ornamental borders of engravings, where a regular arrangement of repeated forms was desired, *criblé* was put upon the list of forgotten arts.

The early woodcut, known as the St. Christopher of 1423, is important in the history of wood engraving.[1] It represents the giant saint carrying the infant Christ over a stream. As he walks through the waves he secures his footing with a palm tree which serves for a staff. On the left is a landscape, apparently meant to depict a slope at the foot of which there is a mill. The mill wheel is turning, and in front of the door a man leaning upon an ass waits for his meal. A second man appears climbing the hill, and carrying a sack across his shoulders. The other side shows a monastery, with its prayer bell, and before the building a monk who kneels and holds up a lantern which is intended, mystically and figuratively speaking, to light St. Christopher's steps. Christ is shown in the act of blessing, while he grasps a sceptre in his other hand. The saint holds his head as if listening attentively. The story is all told, and clearly told, but in a crude manner. The drawing is archaic. The perspective of the hill is absurd. So also is that of the water wheel, yet the sluice out of which the water pours is correctly drawn. The figures are not bad, especially that of the kneeling monk, who holds his lantern in a very natural way. The drawing of St. Christopher's hands as they grasp the stem of the tree is good; so also are his draperies. But the water is represented in the most primitive manner, that of early Egyptian painting; the fish likewise, not in the water, scarcely on it, and yet not really in the air; at all events not in the least in the position of swimming. So likewise the rabbit poking his head out of the ground,—animal and opening are drawn at a different angle from the ground, while the plants are silhouetted, and look as if they were pasted vertically upon the surface of the print, attributes, all, of early Egyptian, maplike landscapes; and all childish work as compared with the folds of St. Christopher's sleeve. The trees, especially the tree at the top of the hill above the mill, are drawn as Giotto drew trees, and as they are to be seen in Gothic missals, each leaf distinctly outlined and laid on flat

[1] For a discussion of the date of this interesting woodcut see "Catalogue of German and Flemish Woodcuts," Campbell Dodgson, British Museum, Vol. I, page 7, note.

as if cut from paper. Such drawing, earlier than the time of the Van Eycks, though not necessarily much earlier, has led some to regard the St. Christopher as the work of an inferior artist. On the other hand, the dignity of the central group, which cannot be denied and which makes that part of the engraving so superior to the rest, has led others to believe the work to have been executed by two different men. Technically the cutting of the lines is sure, as well as graceful. Notice the accurate delineation of the palm leaves and the ripples of the water, and particularly, the lines which form the hair and beard of the saint. They would not be discreditable to Dürer.

The Japanese art of printing in colors from wood blocks is said to have originated some two hundred years ago. These things are often distinguished by delicacy and grace of line. As the art progressed its high-water mark was reached by Kunisada, in the early years of the nineteenth century. These Japanese actors (Fig. 21) are a characteristic work of Kunisada. In many respects this print resembles the St. Christopher of 1423, although it is far finer as a drawing, because it is a more graceful and homogeneous piece of design. Note with care the technical excellence of the lines, especially those of the nose, ear, and fingers of the actor standing, and those of the arm, cheek, and nose of the other. For exquisite precision and decision they are paramount to any wood lines ever cut.

Before passing to another branch of the subject we must notice the double lines of text with the date 1423, at the bottom of the St. Christopher print (Fig. 20). Emphasis is to be put upon the fact that it would have been a simple and an easy matter to have left the picture out and covered the entire block with text, and so to have printed it. He who had done this would have produced a printed page. As a matter of fact, the first printed pages were of this sort, and when, for the first time, a number of such pages were bound together the first printed book came into existence. These were what are known as block-books, i.e., books printed from engraved wood blocks. There is little evidence to indicate that any of these block-books were produced before 1450, and there is much evidence to prove that they were of German origin. The finest of them were, however, made and printed in Flanders immediately subsequent to 1460. It is not possible to say just when the Dutch and German wood engravers began to add a line, or lines, of text to explain their pictures, but whenever that did happen a move was made toward the invention of printing, as we

understand it, for this fixed line of lettered text is generally acknowledged to have led to printing with movable characters, the earliest attempts at which are usually attributed to the year 1440 or immediately thereabouts. The St. Christopher woodcut has been examined to find out wherein, *as a*

Fig. 21. Actors. Kunisada.

drawing, it is good and where inferior. The illustrations of the earliest block-books are decidedly superior to it. In the block-books then, we behold not only the prototype of the printed page but also a decided improvement in the art of wood engraving. By binding these woodcuts into volumes they became less subject to being lost, or destroyed, and, as a

consequence, many of them have been preserved, whereas of the single sheet prints like the St. Christopher there are not many left.

Among the many block-books the four most important are "Biblia Pauperum" (Poor Man's Bible), "Canticum Canticorum" (Song of Songs), "Ars Moriendi" (Art of Dying), and the "Speculum Humanæ Salvationis" (Mirror of Human Salvation). These are all of Flemish origin and can be dated between 1460 and 1470. There are block-books of German origin which date back a decade earlier, and in some of them the text was done by hand, i.e., written, and not engraved. The pictures in these are prints but the text is done in the old way of manuscripts. These German block-books are crude as compared with those named above, the four of Flemish origin, but their existence may be taken in a measure to prove the contentions of those who claim that block-books with woodcut text are of later date than the invention of printing.

The "Biblia" is made up of leaves of small folio size. Each leaf is ornamented with woodcuts occupying about half of the space across the center of the page. The central one is a scene from the New Testament and is flanked by scenes from the Old Testament. Thus Christ's Temptation is shown in the middle, with Esau selling his birthright at one side, and Adam, Eve, and the Serpent at the other. Above and below the central compartment there are pictures of prophets, two in each case, while the lower corners of the page are filled with Latin texts from the Vulgate. No effort need be made to distinguish the editions of this famous book. It is impossible. The text and pictures are printed on one side of the paper only. Frequently the sheets are glued together so that the leaves have the appearance of ordinary pages.

The "Canticum" is a small folio volume with woodcuts on each leaf, printed on one side only. Its subjects are taken from the "Book of Canticles, or Song of Solomon." The leaves are pasted together like those of the "Biblia." Each print has a scroll, or scrolls, with texts in large letters, interspersed among the designs. In each cut, the Virgin appears as the principal character, and in none are the figures more clearly distinguished from the scrolls than in the page chosen for illustration (Fig. 22). In spite of the extreme simplicity of this cut, and the short, horizontal, parallel lines which are its only apology for shade and shadow, there is a certain rhythm in the figures, and something that is attractive in the highly Gothic drawing of the characters. However rude, even ridiculous, the

faces may be thought, no one will deny that there is grace and dignity in the poise and pose of bodies and heads.

The "Speculum" is a book very famous in the much vexed history of typography. In the sense in which the "Biblia" is a block-book, i.e., a book printed entirely, text and illustrations, from wood blocks, it is impossible to call the "Speculum" a true block-book, because the text of some copies is, for a considerable part, printed with movable type, and, in others, entirely so. It is a work of more importance in the history of typography than of engraving, its woodcuts resembling those of the "Canticum" and the

Fig. 22. Block Book. Canticum Canticorum.

"Biblia." The crude nature of this special phase of the art of engraving, both as to drawing and cutting, is well illustrated by the famous "Ars Moriendi," a book much used by priests when visiting the sick and dying. It is thoroughly German Gothic in conception, but lifted above the grotesque, and thereby it acquires true dignity. For example, the head of God the Father in the Trinity group (Fig. 23) has real beauty and so the wings of the angels, one of whom points upwards to heaven, one downward to hell, while the third prays.

After the invention of typography, the wood engravers of Italy, many of whom lived and worked in Venetian territory, turned their at-

tention to the art of woodcutting with zeal, in order to make suitable illustrations for the numerous books printed at Venice during the latter years of the fifteenth century. Before this time woodcuts, such as the St. Christopher of 1423, often carelessly colored with red, yellow, and

Fig. 23. Block Book. Ars Moriendi.

green, and made in Germany, or those either made at home or imported into Italy, were intended for distribution among the common people. The purpose of them was didactic or commemorative; to teach biblical history or to memorialize saints and miracles, somewhat after the fashion of Sunday school picture cards at present. Hence they had to be inex-

pensive and numerous, and so, naturally, their manufacture fell to the poorer artists and the inferior craftsmen. When, however, the same art was employed in Venice, or in the North, as the block-books testify, better workmanship and finer design were demanded, in order that the cuts might be in keeping with the dignity and value of the printed book. In Venice this art at once displayed vigor and before the end of the fifteenth century an unknown designer had made the delicate and elaborate woodcuts for the celebrated and curious "Dream of Poliphilo," the book of a priest,—a rhapsody typical of the early Renaissance in the way in which pagan thought is mingled with Christian, and art and archeology are jumbled together with love, romance, and philosophy.

We must now give our attention to the art of metal engraving, which, remember, was and is, incised engraving; what is usually called line engraving. It was very early practiced north of the Alps, as wood engraving was south. One of the earliest German metal engravers of whose works much is known is the so-called master E.S., recognized by his initials, which appear on his plates, sometimes with the date 1466. His works are numerous and in some respects resemble those of Israhel van Meckenem. His drawing is often incorrect and his perspective bad, but his engravings are especially valuable "as being probably the first German production in which feeling and emotion are successfully expressed." Their technique is very delicate and less dry and thin than that of some of the earliest Italian engravings. His shade and shadow hatching is systematic and foretells that of Dürer. In his draperies and in the naked parts of his figures he made use of dots and short lines by means of which he achieved better modeling than had hitherto been attained. When, in hatching, the lines are crossed, it is never at, or near, right angles as is frequently the case in early Italian prints. He is a master of the Gothic character of fifteenth-century German art at its best; of attenuated bodies and more attenuated members, fingers, for example; of Gothic forms of architecture; of angular draperies, and of most lovely, yet most unnatural leaves and flowers, put together in fascinating and almost meaningless confusion; finally, a great designer of crowns and coronets and croziers and other goldsmith's details wherever he can find places for them in his subjects. In the print of the "Virgin and Child with St. Margaret and St. Catherine in a Garden" (Fig. 24), all these attributes are clearly displayed. No less true is this of the master's mastery of design so far as parts are con-

cerned, or his failure when it comes to the whole. The wonder of it is, so much awkwardness and so much beauty. His work has the unfailing grotesque touch which was so dear to the Gothic artists of the fifteenth century. There is humor, too, which was another of the natural loves of the time, and, above all, a homely directness which compels affectionate regard even yet. Note the little dog dragging at Christ's shift and

Fig. 24. Virgin and Child with Saints. Master E. S.

barking with all his might. Then turn to the wings and the harp of the left-hand angel, three very similar triangular shapes, their every line and mark a miracle of lovely and ordered thinking set there these four centuries and more, for man's delight. Look too how these same triangular shapes frame the angel; and then, what a funny angel he is! But first and last the master E.S. was Gothic, and a master of Gothic design, which always meant a real human being.

Line Engraving and Wood in the North

The earliest German metal engraver of distinct importance as an artist was Martin Schongauer, known in Germany as Martin Schön and in France as *le beau* Martin, because of the expressions of feeling or emotion which he put into the faces and attitudes of his subjects; for example, the careful and loving way of placing the divine Child in his mother's arms, and her manner of regarding him, making the engravings of Schongauer quite unlike all the woodcuts and metal prints of earlier date. The fact is that this beautiful Martin was a true artist-draughtsman as well as an exceedingly able manipulator of the burin. For this reason every print of his is a work of fine drawing, i.e., drawing which tells truth of physical facts and, in the telling, casts over them the noble illumination of an understanding heart. He was the contemporary of Perugino, Raphael's master, and it is said that the two held each other in high regard and were in the habit of exchanging drawings and engravings. A few years later their two great disciples, Raphael and Dürer, did the same. Schongauer was early taught the goldsmith's trade and later that of a painter. He appears not to have taken up the art of engraving, for printing purposes, until late in life. Bartsch concludes that he derived his skill with the burin in cutting designs upon plate, years before he began to engrave upon copper. He was, however, the first true painter-graver of the North. Almost every print of his is marked M. and S. His well-known "Madonna" (Fig. 25) is a graceful composition, and is, in some degree, expressive of emotion. The pose is easy and the draperies are well cast, yet it is attractive rather than beautiful. The drawing of the hands, the modeling of the features of the Virgin's face, and the light and shade, obtained by most careful hatching, and curving of lines, as well as by varied spacing, dots, and short lines, are all technically as admirable as they are in advance of any Italian work of the same period, yet the completed subject lacks abstract beauty, while the painstaking likeness of every part clearly marks this print as of early German origin in contradistinction to Italian. Placing it by the "Assumption" called Finiguerra's (Fig. 11), these respective attributes speak for themselves. One is full of the homely northern grandeur of Gothicism; the other of abstract beauty, graceful balance and counterbalance of mass and line; of the ideals of classicism as yet, in 1452, unconsciously dreamed of, not fully awakened, in reviving Italy. But this "Madonna" is an early work of Schongauer's and vastly inferior to some of his later works, such as his "Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene" (Fig. 26), exquisite in sentiment

and technique, and superior, beyond expression, to anything that the school of Finiguerra ever accomplished; a work, however, that plainly shows Italian influence. The landscape background, though slight, is full of beauty, and never in any print, not even in Rembrandt's "Gold-weigher's

Fig. 25. Madonna. Martin Schongauer.

Field" (Fig. 7), have the receding planes of distance, and the details by which they are shown, been more ably managed.

The difference between Schongauer and Finiguerra is the difference between a Gothic figure from the Cathedral of Chartres, and a Greek figure of the golden age of Athens. Call to mind the home-loving, sym-

pathetic women of a medieval, northern "Visitation"; Mary and Elisabeth, beside the door of the Cathedral of Chartres, likenesses to the very life; to the outward facts of appearance, and to the inner fact of their joy in meeting, and hearing, and telling each other the good news, particular and universal qualities, as in all great art everywhere and always. Compare these with any typical piece of classical work, the Venus of Melos,

Fig. 26. Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene. Martin Schongauer.

for example, and we cannot fail to see, though we may not have understood what has been said about attributes of abstract or general beauty, that here we have the finest instances of fact chosen from among many instances, and these, in a measure, idealized and made the very abstraction of beauty; then placed, as in this marble, within the limits of a finite and human expression. On the one hand the work of men who were the inheritors alike of classical traditions and classical works of art; on the other

Fig. 27. Fanciful Composition. Israhel van Meckenem.

hand, the work of men who inherited neither works nor traditions, but were saved to certain greatness, as all men are who in simple, deep sincerity take nature as their guide and follow her with open-eyed humility.

One other engraver remains to be spoken of in this chapter, Israhel van Meckenem. He died in 1503 at Bocholt. He is remarkable for enormous output rather than invention or technique. He did, however, as a designer of scroll ornaments and grotesque subjects, produce unique things. More charming and varied arabesque patterns, including the figures of men and animals intricately woven together with leaves and flowers, have never been cut by an engraver. It would be difficult to find, either in ancient or modern art, a more refined and delightfully humorous composition than the roasting of a hunter and the boiling of his dogs by a company of hares (Fig. 27). You will not find much humor in Schongauer; do not mistake the unintentional caricature of some of his work for humor; much less will you find it in Finiguerra, or in the engravings of the Botticelli-Baldini group. But this print contains a fine expression of the humorous which is always so close to the human and so intimately related to the homely character of the northerners. In the main, this thing is unimaginative, thoroughly concrete. It is Dutch, or German, in being opposed to the highly imaginative, nobly wrought abstract beauty which is foretold by early Italian art, and, in late, developed to a perfection never attained by any other race save the Greek. The actual burin work, the engraving of the plate, is thoroughly good, and in the manner of Schongauer, although Israhel has succeeded in differentiating the smooth and shiny surface of the hunter's leather jacket and the sleek flanks of the

dog in the pot just behind the hunter's head, from the furry coats of their tormenters, the hares. This is accomplished by using continuous lines in the former, and broken or dotted in the latter case. It offers an example of the attempt to differentiate textures in engraving, i.e., to give fur

Fig. 28. Death and Burial of the Virgin. Israhel van Meckenem.

its rough look, and the smooth appearance to leather. Could anything of its kind be more amusing than the tail of the dog in the second pot, or the expression of the dog in the third pot? The cook is putting in a pinch of salt, as he watches his master writhing in agony on the spit, while the water for his own stew grows warmer. Above all, how ridiculous is the

expression of important concern depicted on the faces of the hares, those that turn the spit, and those more important yet, that tend the broth. Neither *Life* nor *Punch* declines such drawing. Which of them can boast work more technically excellent? It is not maintained that this is great art, but it is maintained to be an example of the best sort of a very worthy art, and one practiced in a far inferior manner too frequently at the present time, both as to the thought expressed and the manner of expression; subject and technique.

It would, however, be very unfair to leave the impression that Israhel van Meckenem did not produce large and important works. One such, "The Death and Burial of the Virgin" (Fig. 28), shows this engraver at his best, both as a master of technical attainments of high order, and as an artist-draughtsman of distinctly dramatic powers. And yet the solemnity of the deathbed scene is touched with that comic character which always shows in the faces and mien of those who, upon any occasion, are consciously trying to look the proper part rather than unconsciously just looking it. The German Gothic, until we come to Dürer, is almost invariably so touched. In this respect it differs fundamentally from the French. The comic touch on the part of the actors in the burial procession is certainly not to be gainsaid. Israhel van Meckenem as a workman was skillful and as a draughtsman he was proficient, but in the sense in which Martin Schongauer was an artist and in the sense in which we shall see that Albert Dürer was a supreme artist, he was distinctly lacking.

CHAPTER IV.

MANTEGNA, MARCANTONIO, LUCAS OF LEYDEN, DÜRER AND HOLBEIN

WE now come to a small group of great engravers; two Italians, two Germans, and a Dutchman. Only one of them exceeded three score years and ten, and, with the same exception, all of them were at their best during those marvelous decades which closed the fifteenth century and opened the sixteenth, what time discovery, in the person of Columbus, doubled the world's area, and freedom of thought, in the person of Luther, set on foot the Reformation. Those forty years, 1480-1520, marked the full tide of the Renaissance; an age in which revived classicism almost completely usurped the place of medievalism; a time when the rank and file of men, high and low, whether occupied with political affairs or affairs ecclesiastical, were worldly to an extreme degree. It was an age in which many slow growths which mark the progress of civilization came to full bloom; such, for example, as architecture, personified by Bramante; painting, by Raphael; sculpture, by Michelangelo; and many other arts, among which engraving takes a foremost place; an age which more than any other produced the greatest of artist-draughtsmen. The Renaissance was a period of extraordinary intellectual activity which found expression in science and art; an epoch in which mankind had wonderfully beautiful thoughts about this world with its joyous life, and hands carefully trained from generation to generation for putting such thoughts into tangible forms. Hence it came about that the Renaissance was an epoch of great art; the root of which is good drawing, and one of the perfect flowers of which is great drawing done for its own sake, i.e., regarded as worth doing for its own sake by the greatest geniuses, and looked upon as precious beyond compare by the best judges.

For centuries the larger part of the civilized world had been mainly occupied with ideas that were the direct outgrowth of Christian theology, such as death, judgment, and man's final and eternal state. The art of that long period, as the monuments attest, reflects these ideas. Then came the Renaissance, a gradual and partial return to the intellectual conceptions of the Greeks and Romans, whose fundamentally lovely notions about the beauty of this world, and the joy of living, found such adequate expression in all branches of classic art, but in which there was comparatively little indication of thought concerning anything after death. As time went on, the corruption of Catholic Christianity, and the revival of paganism, both of which marked the Renaissance, led to that reaction which is known as the Protestant Reformation. Naturally we should expect to find, just what we do find, a constant and direct expression of the thought and tendency of the age in its plastic and graphic arts. In selecting the five engravers we should have been forced, even had we wished otherwise, to include: first, Andrea Mantegna, whose works indicate the return of the classic spirit, yet young in the world in the year 1450, mingling itself with dominant Christianity; second, Marcantonio Raimondi, the friend and contemporary of Raphael, who, like Mantegna, so far as he had a religious belief had that of the then officially unquestioned creed of the Vatican; third, Albert Dürer, a few lines from whose diary under date of "Friday before Pentecost, 1521," and written on hearing a false report of Luther's death, are sufficient to show his attitude: "If Luther is dead who will explain to us the evangel with the same clearness? How much might he not have written still in ten or twenty years! All you pious Christians, deplore with me the loss of this man, and pray the Lord that he will send another guide. O, Erasmus of Rotterdam, where wilt thou remain? Wilt thou see the injustice and blind tyranny of the powers now ruling? Hear me, knight of Christ. Ride by the side of the Lord XS; old as thou art, and but a feeble creature, thou too mayst win the martyr's crown." Next, Hans Holbein, who is known to have been in sympathy with, if not to have taken an active part in, the Reformation. Finally, Lucas of Leyden, who was one of the first great artists of Holland. It is to the masterly quality of these men's engravings; to their powers as artist-draughtsmen of the first rank, and to a few of their works considered as expressions of the age in which they lived, that our attention must be turned.

Recall the two classes into one or the other of which all engravers fall. The first, and more important, though by far the smaller in point of numbers, is made up of artists; of painters who do their own engraving; men who actually handle the burin, and cut or engrave their own designs on the metal or the wood. This is the painter-graver class. From the painter-gravers we get engravings which are original works by masters; their actual drawing upon the metal or the wood. The second class is made up largely of men who are neither painters nor draughtsmen, in the sense of masters, but rather of those who copy, by means of engraving, the paintings and drawings of other men, masters usually, for commercial ends. They engrave, we say, some popular picture. They translate it into the language of black and white, to speak figuratively; i.e., by means of engraving they represent the various tones or values[1] of the colored picture, as well as its forms; in other words, the look of the picture expressed by the painter in color is, by the engraver, rendered in terms of pure light and shade. This is the class of translator-engravers, from whom we get the other two varieties of engravings; copied works of masters, copied *under* the master's supervision; copied works of masters, copied *without* the master's supervision. Obviously the work of the painter-graver will be more valuable than that of the translator-graver, yet it would be a great mistake to suppose that high orders of talent among engravers have not been given to copying.

First, the engraving of a very great artist, judged by any standards; the work of the first important painter-graver, Andrea Mantegna. He was born at Padua in 1431, and died at Mantua in 1506. When a very young man he was put to study with an artist by the name of Squarcione, who, though a second-rate painter, exerted a far-reaching and nobly broadening influence upon Italian art. Squarcione traveled throughout Italy, some assert that he even went to Greece, for the express purpose of collecting objects of antique art such as urns, cameos, arms, vases, paintings, and sculptures. These he gathered together in Padua, where he created a museum and founded what was perhaps the first school of art in the mod-

[1] As the word tone or value is here used it means the amount of light and shade in a picture, regardless or irrespective of the color; as if it were possible to dissolve away the color of a picture and leave the shapes, and lights, and shades, and shadows, in gray, and black, and white. And this is just what engraving in any of its various forms does, and why engraving that is done from drawings rather than from works of color, is likely to be the best engraving, and why pictures conceived directly in the terms of engraving, i.e., in line, and shade, and light, and shadow, are likely to be the finest engravings.

ern sense. Before this such advantages were unknown. For us, to whom museums filled with Greek and Roman marbles, and casts taken from the best antique statues are accessible for purposes of study, it is difficult to picture the time when artists, young and old, able or inferior, were for the most part unacquainted with, as well as unassisted and uninspired by, these wonderful things; a time when there was no Venus of Melos, and no Parthenon frieze. It is scarcely possible to conceive of the effect upon art, or to realize how powerful was the stimulus given to culture by affording scholars and artists direct access to the art of Rome and Greece. It is said that more than a hundred and thirty pupils studied under Squarcione, examining and drawing from the antique. Thus, by calling attention to the beauties of classic art, at a time when comparatively little thought was given to it, Squarcione did much towards reviving the antique, which, at first, and in the person of a genius like Mantegna, was productive of great good, but later, when it deteriorated into a matter of slavish copying, became a powerful agent for degeneration. Squarcione, in collecting works of Greek and Roman art, and setting his pupils to studying them, did for the graphic arts what such a scholar as Leonardo Bruni did for literature by unearthing and bringing together many hitherto unknown works of the classic authors, and giving Italy her first translations of Greek philosophers, poets, and historians. Together, these men, and scores of others similarly employed, were doing everything in their power to revive the art and learning of the ancient world, and any one of them might have said, as one of the earliest and most enthusiastic of their number was in the habit of saying: "I go to awake the dead." It was their avowed mission in life, and never were there greater or more intelligent enthusiasts.

In the earlier painting of Mantegna the effect of his close study of bas-relief sculpture is clearly discernible. Many of his frescoes, fine as they are in composition and perspective, by their rigidity suggest bas-relief, as do they also by their lack of such coloring as makes one think of light at the same time that he distinguishes objects as having their true colors. They are subject to the modern criticism which is but a repetition of Vasari's when he says: "Andrea had therein copied from antique marbles, from which no man can perfectly acquire the art of painting, seeing that stone must ever retain some of the rigidity of its nature, and never displays that tender softness proper to fresh and natural forms which are pliant and exhibit various movements." The very money which Andrea earned by

painting, he expended in forming a collection of antiques for himself and in buying books which contained information concerning ancient customs and manners. He had, in common with his age, a consuming passion for the ancient world and its art, which, so far as Mantegna knew it, or we know it, was, primarily, an art of form, in the sense of solids, i.e., statues, no considerable works of painting, of color, having survived. Hence it is not remarkable that he should have embraced the art of engraving as a mode of expression peculiarly suited to his dominant manner of thought, which, as the result of his studies, was naturally concerned with form, in the sense of the three dimensions expressed in outline, and light and shade.

Of the twenty-three engravings of Mantegna described by Bartsch,[1] ten are of Christian subjects, the Resurrection or the Entombment, while ten others are chosen incidents of Roman history or mythology, and the remaining three are portraits. This fact serves to illustrate the manner of his thinking, in his time new and unusual, which mingled Greek myth with the most sacred subject of Christian writ. Mantegna engraved a battle of Tritons and sea gods (Fig. 29) in which Envy is inciting the monsters to fight. The powerful figure of a Triton is shown in the act of delivering a blow with the staff which he holds in his right hand, while the other arm is occupied in guiding his fabulous steed, the fore quarters and head of which are horse, the hind quarters fish, while wings are attached to both sides. In place of hair and ears the Triton has a beautifully designed head-gear of acanthus leaves. It is the direct result of the study of the classics. On the other hand the action of the creature's fore legs, the slippery swirl of his scaly tail, the distended nostrils and the mouth stretched wide for mockery, all prove Mantegna to have been a close observer of nature. While this work is full of life and motion, it none the less has a quality, due in great measure to the way in which the light and shade are managed, which cannot fail to call bas-relief sculpture to our minds. Now all this becomes quite extraordinary when we consider the exceedingly simple manner of the engraving, that of Mantegna's predecessors—see the anonymous fifteenth-century Florentine "Assumption" (Fig. 18)—as it was Mantegna's to the end; pure outline more or less veiled, as it were, by shade and shadow. This shade and shadow are made of parallel lines set diagonally; lines closely akin to those of a

[1] "In all, some twenty-five plates have been attributed to Mantegna, but it is very doubtful whether the master himself engraved more than the seven or eight which so far excel the rest in quality." "A Short History of Engraving," by A. M. Hind.

pen drawing. There is almost no attempt to make the lines of the shade follow, reinforce, i.e., give any idea of the contours of the objects shaded. This is especially true of the waves produced by the forward dashing of the sea-monster. The print offers a good example of the power of artistic genius to make simple means go a long way in the expression of complex action, instinct, and sentiment.

Fig. 29. Battle of Sea-gods, a Part. Mantegna.

Just before 1488 Mantegna completed his chief work, done for the Marquis of Mantua, a series of pictures representing the Triumph of Cæsar (Fig. 30). Of these pictures he engraved three plates.[1] They offer a fine example of the master's magnificent power of composing. They contain a marvelous display of antiquarian and archeological knowledge of detail, especially that one known as the Elephants; of incense burners, flaming braziers, vases

[1] There is doubt about the authenticity of these plates.

and vessels sacrificial, without number; helmets, corselets, and arms, the bull with bound temples for the sacrifice, preceded by men wearing fillets and blowing wind instruments, and followed by laurel-crowned elephants richly caparisoned, and mounted by youths holding aloft the emblems of

Fig. 30. Triumph of Cæsar. Mantegna.

power and successful conquest; all these, and many more, entering into the composition lend pomp and splendor of accessory to the central idea of the triumphal procession as it moves with the dignified rhythm and irresistible force of a well-ordered phalanx; of huge beasts; of a conqueror's chariots. The design is made up of broad and simple masses, distinctly outlined; of

a succession of splendid forms; but in no instance is the elaboration of details, neither the richest twisting of a candelabrum nor the most intricate pattern of a saddlecloth, allowed to confuse the central thought, the real import of the work. The background of parallel diagonal lines, ploughed or engraved, presumably from left to right upwards, is repeated in lighter and slighter degree to give the required shade to the figures. But, owing to the strong and certain outlines of the figures, the background and the shade are nowhere confounded. This print is filled with classic regard for orderly arrangement and numbered masses, attributes of all good bas-relief sculpture, revived and made to live again by this rejuvenated pagan, Andrea Mantegna, and yet the work is, as a whole, in the best sense, original. It is a true love-child of the Italian Renaissance.

The Dante vignette (Fig. 14), a work of the Botticelli-Baldini group, so-called, is an example of art in which the execution was about equal to expressing the artistic conception, which was a primitive one.[1] The "Triumph of Cæsar" is a work of art in which a very fully developed artistic conception found expression in a technique almost equally developed, because so simple and adequate, though one which was afterwards, in some respects at least, improved by the chief representative of Italian engraving, Marcantonio. As conveyancers of the artist's conception by means of drawing; as works which strictly regard the conventions and inherent limitations of the engraver's art, the "Triumph" and the "Tritons" (Fig. 29) are alike marvels. At the end of his life of Mantegna, Vasari pays a deservedly high tribute to the artist as such, and adds, in closing, an appreciation of his zeal for engraving, based upon the grounds that it helped disseminate a liberal culture by enabling others, as he says, "the whole world, to obtain the power of seeing many of his works and, in like manner, now the art has become so universal, to allow everyone to judge of the manner of all the artists who ever lived." Thus early was engraving recogized as a force in the world of learning and culture. On the other hand Martin Schongauer's admirable modeling, the light and shade in his engravings, obtained by the use of curved lines, short lines, and dots, has already been

[1] Primitive, for example, in the sense that the artist attempted to make his picture produce an impression of the progress of time; the succession of events in time; not an impression of the event in a given instant, so to speak, *uno ictu*, at a stroke. And yet there is nothing primitive in those drawings by Botticelli done with a silver point and already discussed, which may fairly be assumed as the basis on which the engraver of these illustrations formed his ideas. But the engraving, *per se*, is primitive in the sense of undeveloped and distinctly immergent rather than sure and, as we say, thoroughly accomplished.

considered. As a chiaroscurist, a master of light and shade, he far surpassed his contemporary, Mantegna. In Martin's work outline and shade are merged in a way that resembles the modern, while in Mantegna's they are always separate things. But Schongauer fell far short of Mantegna as a composer, his designs not infrequently being cluttered with extraneous objects which detract from the breadth of the whole.[1] Though a better technician than Mantegna, Schongauer was not so consummate an artist. Now the Italians, always eager to improve their arts, were not slow to recognize those qualities in which northern engraving surpassed their own. It was Albert Dürer who in great measure revolutionized Italian engraving. He was born in 1471 and died in 1528, but in spite of the fact that he was the greatest of the northern line engravers we can not pass by the Dutch engraver, Lucas of Leyden, who also learned the goldsmith's trade, and came out a painter, and is known as one of the ablest of line engravers, perhaps having no superiors save Marcantonio and Albert Dürer. Lucas showed an early interest in texture, and a tendency, very noticeable in later Dutch art, to express inherent differences of texture and surface in engraving. Vasari notes this in a reference to a print of his called "Human Force," finished with such care that the glitter of the arms and the gloss of the black horse's coat are clearly to be distinguished, an effect of very difficult production in design.[2] Note the fur of the lining and collar of the robe of the third king in "The Three Kings" (Fig. 31), and the feathers in the hats of some of the personages in the background of this print. The desire for expressing texture is one that often costs an artist the far more precious quality of breadth, and, in later, and in much modern engraving, often usurps the place of real merit, because, by its marvelous power of representing petty details and unimportant characteristics, it appeals to the eyes of unedu-

[1] By breadth, in this connection, is meant that character in pictorial design which keeps the sense of the whole subject, the artist's conception as a whole, forever before the mind of the spectator, never allowing him to forget the whole because of the interest or the charm that may pertain to the details, or parts of which the whole is made up. In other words, breadth in pictures means that the forest is not forgotten because of the trees; that the subject, as a whole, is ever before the observer's mind because it was so before the artist's. Such breadth has its place in all great art and means that the artist, while he is dealing with numberless details, is always selecting and omitting, in order to emphasize the intellectual intent which is to be conveyed by his picture to his spectators. His natural eye is always on the object, but his inner eye is never closed to that totality of meaning to which the object is but secondary, though requisite and necessary. The true artist always sets art before nature, though he never for one instant forgets that art cannot rival or equal nature.

[2] Design here means drawing in the usual sense.

cated persons, who are always to be caught by any appearance of deceptive realism in pictures. Such persons will often pass by qualities of great design with the comment, "It does not look natural." His portraits offer repeated illustration of the delicacy and extreme accuracy of Lucas of Leyden's touch with the burin, and testify to the truth of Vasari's statement, just quoted, by the manner, for example, in which the roughened edge of a felt hat is distinguished from the smooth shiny nap of the under side of the brim. Again Vasari says that Lucas "made

Fig. 31. The Three Kings. Lucas of Leyden.

every portion of his picture recede into the distance, each object being less clearly made out as the distance increases, exactly as we find in nature." The truth of these and many similar statements is attested by his splendid "Three Kings Presenting their Gifts," one of his best engravings. This same print illustrates the rapid progress made in the matter of grouping figures, in perspective, and in light and shade as compared, for instance, with the work of Schongauer. How completely, in the full modeling of figures, in the different planes represented, all so real-

istic, this print differs from Mantegna's "Triumph of Cæsar," which, though expressive of the abstract beauty of mass and line, the very ecstasy of rhythm, is in no degree realistic. Together they offer notable illustration of the native bents and inherited tendencies of northern and southern art respectively. At the age of fourteen, Lucas of Leyden was a master of the art of engraving. At sixteen he engraved the print "Cowherd and Milkmaid," which shows him to have been a true forerunner of the great Dutch animal painters. It is to be doubted if Cuyp or Paul Potter could have improved on the cattle that Lucas of Leyden drew, and engraved in this charming little print. In a not less masterly and direct manner did he treat trees and the various objects which go to make up what is ordinarily thought of as landscape. In no narrow or restricted sense was he one of the early advancers of pure draughtsmanship, and a splendid master of the art of making pictures in line at a time when this art was not far advanced. His is a name to be reckoned with in drawing and engraving equally, despite the fact that many authorities call his work hard in point of technique, and forbidding in its artistic concept.

We now return to Dürer, great painter, as well as greatest engraver, who, literally, carrying the ideals of a northern artist into Italy, gave Italian artists a fresh inspiration, and, directly, by his own engraving, inspired the greatest of all the engravers of Italy, Marcantonio. It would not be far from the truth to say that Dürer took the doctrine of realism into Italy, and carried back the doctrine of idealism. Dürer represents the former, as Raphael does the latter.

Little is known definitely of Dürer's early education, beyond a few important facts stated in his diary. "When I had learned to read and write my father took me from school with the intention of teaching me goldsmith work. In this I began to do very well, but my love was toward painting. My father let me have my will, and in the year 1486, Nov. 30th, he settled me apprentice with Michel Wohlgemuth to serve him three years." After this period of apprenticeship came four years of travel and study, but where, and of what, we know not with exactitude. Dürer cannot have learned a great deal from Wohlgemuth, for his earliest works differ radically from extant work of his master, who had an extremely archaic manner. From Martin Schongauer, justly called Martin the Skillful, he doubtless learned much. One of his earliest engravings is a copy of one of Schongauer's with his own monogram, A. D.,

attached to it. From first to last Albert Dürer's drawing, and engraving, which, Ruskin well said, "differs from common drawing only by the difficulties it has to encounter," displays exact likeness of every minutest part of the subject treated. It is full of intense, passionate, and reverent admiration for nature, which gives it that supreme interest which it has for artists, painters and draughtsmen alike, yet it lacks the idealized portraiture which places Italian design, at its best, above all other. Dürer's compositions, however filled with detail, are never confused. Throughout his work there is evidence of rigorous selection. No detail, however trivial, enters into his design by accident. In other words, the intellectual intent of the artist is emphasized far above any interest which may be accessory to it; the "action of the piece" on Dürer's stage, his picture, is never confused by the setting, and yet it is pole-distant from the Italian conception of idealized portraiture. Much of Dürer's design is homely in the right sense of the word, but none of it is stupid, or dull. Much of it is religious, but little of it involves doctrinal dispute, such subjects being chosen as "The Apocalypse," one of his earliest sets of woodcuts, fifteen in number, done in 1498, one of the most extraordinary and intense creations of Christian art; perhaps the most so. Or again, other sets, the "Life of the Virgin" in twenty plates, or the two versions of the "Passion of Christ," one set in twelve, and the other in thirty-seven plates, in all of which, so far as subject is concerned, there was evident intent to teach, while in the ease of production and consequent small cost, engraved as they were on wood, the democratic desire to make art the common possession of the common people is evident. In this respect Dürer belonged to the Reformation. His popularity with the public soon became great, and his works were even forged to a considerable extent. This happened abroad, as well as at home, and one instance which is famous in the history of art, believed, by those who follow the otherwise unsupported declarations of Vasari, to have made Dürer very angry and to have induced him to proceed legally against the forger, is that of the Italian engraver, Marcantonio, who copied Dürer's woodcuts on copper, signed them with Dürer's monogram, and sold them to the Italian admirers of the northern artist as authentic works. The fact of the forgery seems unquestioned. The details of the quarrel are more or less apocryphal.

During his life Dürer made two important journeys, one to Venice in 1506, of which we know from letters to his friend, Perkheimer; the

other to the Low Countries in 1520 and 1521, the events of which he recorded in his journal. In a letter dated Venice, Candlemas, 1506, he gives an interesting note upon contemporary Italian opinion of his own work. "They say," he writes, "that my art is not as the antique and therefore is not good. But Gian Bellini, who has praised me much before many gentlemen, wishes to have something from my hand." That he

Fig. 32. The Visitation. Dürer.

was happy in Venice and found there what he did not find at home is proved by the following statement in a letter of the same year, made in reference to his return to Germany: "Alas! how shall I live in Nürnberg after the bright sun of Venice! Here I am the lord; at home only the hanger-on."

"The Visitation" (Fig. 32), tenth in the series of the "Life of the Virgin," exhibits a piece of typical Düreresque landscape. It is also one of

his most delightful compositions. With lines of measurable thickness, and almost no crosshatchings, Dürer has managed to give depth of shade and shadow; with definitely outlined white spaces, effects of light; with straightness, curving, or twisting of lines, the flatness, concavity, and convexity of surfaces. With such simple means, yet all that were appropriate to the nature of his medium, wood, and the character of his tool,[1] he has succeeded in giving much of the floating quality of cloud and the soft fine roundness of foliage. Note the jagged, hollow, sloping hills, and those, white in the sunlight, beyond; the snug village with its inevitable towers, set upon a hill, and the rolling fields, separated from the foreground by the trees kept low behind the principal figures, so that their heads may have prominence by contrast with the background, while to the right they rise high and beautiful, forming a pendant to the wall of the house on the other side. Note, too, the dog and plant in the foreground, and monogram tablet in the center.[2] From prints like this we learn how a picture may be broad and yet full of detail. How forcibly, too, is the intellectual interest emphasized! In the doorway stands the aged, thoughtful Zacharias, his head uncovered; at the right a group of marveling women, all standing back, full of considerate awe at the joy of Mary and Elisabeth, so clearly expressed as they stretch forth their arms and look straight into each other's eyes. The landscape is northern and local. The women are simple housewives. Elisabeth has her keys at her girdle. It is all homely, but is it easy to conceive of a more nearly perfect illustration, imaginative in the manner that it exalts everyday life, and illustrative because it follows the text, makes clear, and emphasizes the verse from St. Luke: "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth"?

[1] "What the great artists have actually done has been to express only that part of themselves which could be readily expressed in the kind of art they happened to be using for the moment." "Soul and Matter in the Fine Arts," by P. G. Hamerton.

[2] "Dürer was in the habit of making the cartouche, framed space or tablet on which he signed his name and placed the date of his picture, an essential and beautiful part of his design. He is curiously akin, in this respect, to the Japanese and Chinese, whose signatures, so-called, are often objects of intrinsically real and enhancing beauty. Compare the superimposed squares for lettering in the upper right, and the unframed lettering in the lower middle of the Japanese drawing of a bird among bamboos, roses, and honeysuckle, Fig. 6, with the name tablet hung on that more than lovely blooming branch with the perched parrot in Dürer's "Temptation." The whole subject of the signatory cartouche as an important feature in design awaits worthy treatment.

The sixteenth of this same series has "The Repose in Egypt" (Fig. 33) for its subject. "He took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod," says St. Matthew. A truly delightful and homely conception of that time has Dürer given us. The technique of this print is the same as that of the

Fig. 33. The Repose in Egypt. Dürer.

"Visitation." To Dürer's mind nothing was more productive, or suggestive of family repose than manly labor and motherly care. Again, although the text says Egypt, we have a typical hill castle of a northern Gothic town and landscape like that behind the city of Juda in the "Visitation," which serve as setting for the scene in which he has depicted Joseph at his bench

with Mary seated at work near by, while Jesus sleeps in the cradle at her knee. Angels watch over and adore him, while charming little cherubs, all fun and pranks, are busily engaged in gathering the waste from the carpenter's bench and piling it into a basket, in thrifty fashion, against tomorrow's

Fig. 34. Melancholia. Dürer.

need. In the sky over all appear God the Father, and the dove of the Holy Spirit, a very distinct way, on Dürer's part, of saying that the second person of the Trinity was at the moment incarnate.

Turning from Dürer's religious engravings as well as from his woodcuts we are confronted by a long list of allegorical and emblematic subjects

done in the finest, i.e., in most exquisite manner of line engraving on copper. Among these are "Death and a Knight," "Fate," "Temperance," and best-known of all, the much discussed "Melancholia" (Fig. 34). It must be understood that Dürer's metal engravings are his own work, while wholly, or to a very large extent, his woodcuts are the work of assistants, under his guidance, cutting his drawings upon the blocks. From one point of view this makes the metal work more absolutely representative of Dürer than the wood; i.e., as being Dürer's *drawing*. On the other hand, when one considers how Dürer designed his wood subjects with especial regard to the process of wood reproduction, and how he watched the actual labor of cutting, the value of these cuts, as representing their great author, will always remain unique. In technical quality his metal engraving is unsurpassed, while, as design, comprehending full chiaroscuro, difficult perspective, and more difficult foreshortenings, it is the model of perfection. It displays a decided advance in the rendering of textures, as may be seen in the polished scalepan of the "Melancholia"; in the sharp folds of the woman's skirt, suggestive of stiff silk as utterly different from the curving folds of the material of her sleeves which look like heavy woolen; or the difference between the texture of the lamb's coat and that of the millstone on which the Cupid sits; or the plane and board in the foreground, and the texture of the inimitably drawn wing with its soft overlapping feathers where it comes into high light. Technically this print is one of the wonders of engraving. The meaning of it, however, is not clear. A great deal has been written about it, and yet will be, but after all has been written the design will probably remain an enigma. Believe as we will, with one authority that it symbolizes truth; with another, intellectual activity; with a third that it was intended to emphasize the text, "All is Vanity";—believe as we like, yet let us not fail to recognize in it the emanation of the mind and hand of genius; a work of art; and "be satisfied," as Lowell said of great poetry, "if it be delightful, or helpful, or inspiring, or all these together, but do not consider too nicely why it is so." As showing Dürer's mastery of pure form, whether the human figure, or animals and trees be under consideration, his "Adam and Eve" (Fig. 35) stands forth preëminent. The influence of the great Italians whom he so admired is marked in his drawing of these two splendid nude figures. The delicacy of their modeling by means of crosshatchings of hair lines, associated with dots, is superb. The softness and sleekness of the cat and mouse which

are lying down together, meaning the time when even the beasts were at peace, are none the less monumental because they are petty matters. The way in which, by the curving and bending of innumerable close-set lines, Dürer, in this miracle of artistic draughtsmanship and technique, tells us

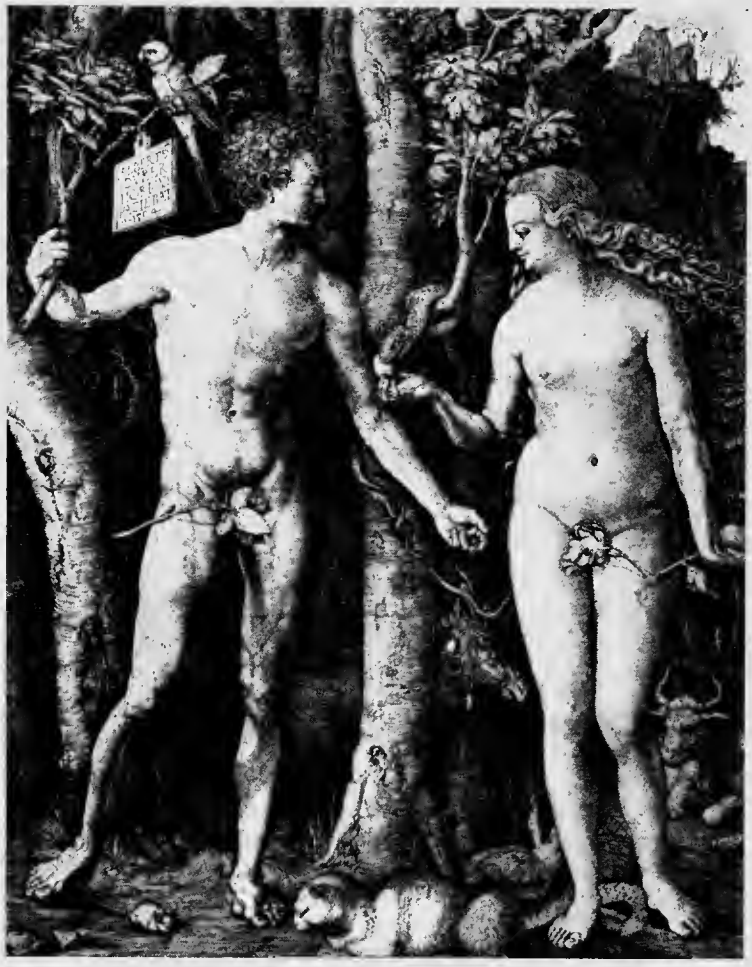


Fig. 35. Adam and Eve. Dürer.

about the roundness of tree trunks and the individual shape of gnarl and break is utterly amazing. The branch bearing apples among fig leaves, a curious disregard of the Biblical comment on gathering figs of thistles, is a bit of difficult and exquisite *drawing* done with a burin held and guided by

Dürer himself. As such it is beyond praise. And notice, too, how, by slightly flattening the serpent's body, he suggests the tight hold which the snake's double coil gives him as he reaches far out to offer the fruit of temptation to the first woman. And yet, great as is this "Adam and Eve," some of his simpler work of the same and a later period is, as art, far superior for the reason that it fathoms more deeply and reports more truthfully the depths of human feeling. Of such is the incomparable little "St.

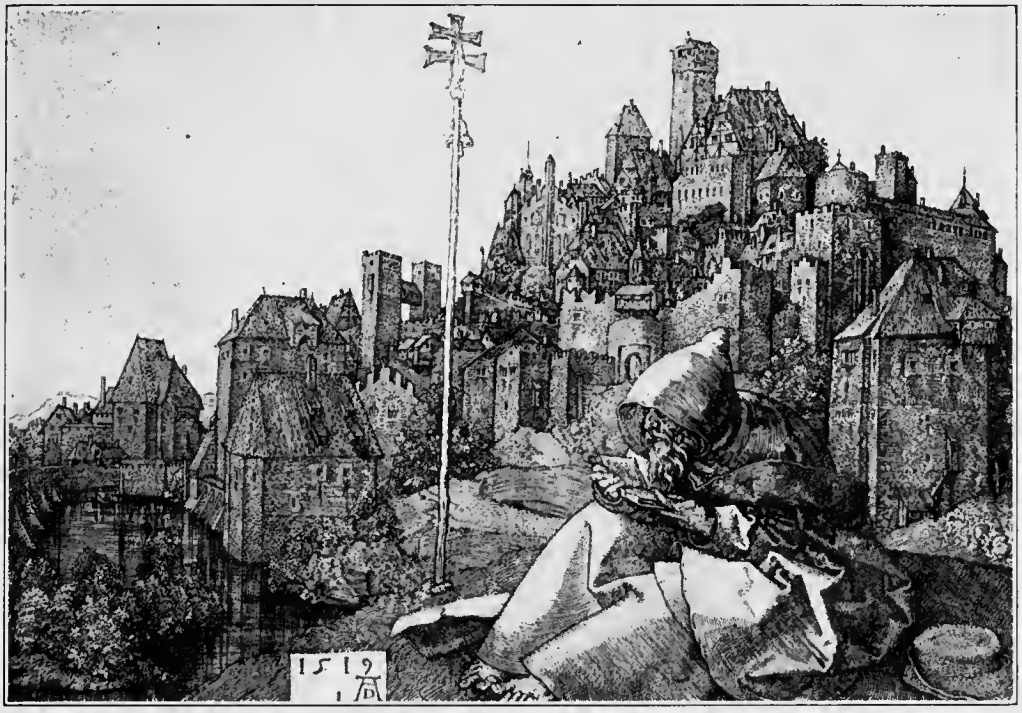


Fig. 36. St. Anthony Outside a City. Dürer.

Anthony outside the Walls of a City" (Fig. 36). The saint, seated and reading, is clad in coat, cape, and cowl, each of which shows to what remarkable degree the forms of objects, in this case folds of drapery, can be rendered by careful curvature of simple parallel lines. Very strong effects of shade and shadow are produced by the simplest possible crosshatching; one set of lines crossed by another, and never crossed in more than two directions. The high fortified town with its buildings in masterly perspective, photographically correct, it might be said, is engraved in the same simple style

as the figure of St. Anthony. So, too, the reflections in the moat, the little trees on the islands, even the reeds at the water's edge, and yet, above all these really minor details, the conception of the artist, intellectual and poetic at once, in a word, his humanity, is distinctly realized, for he makes us feel St. Anthony's complete absorption in his book and his correspondingly complete abstraction from the world about him. At the "Adam and Eve" (Fig. 35) we look and wonder. At the "Melancholia" (Fig. 34) we look and think. At the "St. Anthony" we look, and looking enter into his state of mind to some degree; in fine, feel and sympathize with him; in still other words, we are moved. This means that the little drawing or engraving, they are the same, remember, is possessed of power. So it is, and so it has been felt to be by many men through many, many years. Finally, only that art is consummately great which can move us, for moving implies power. There are other tests of great art besides this one, but this one is final, in the last analysis superseding all the others.

Marcantonio was born in Bologna and was apprenticed to the Bolognese painter, Francesco Francia, in whose workshop he is said by Vasari to have learned the art of engraving ornaments upon articles of wearing apparel, buckles and clasps, and likewise the art of designing or drawing, in which he soon surpassed his master. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but it is reasonably certain that he was still a young man when, in 1509, he set out on his travels, having, to quote Vasari, "conceived the desire which is felt by so many men of seeing somewhat of the world, and the mode of proceeding in use among the artists of other lands." He probably went first to Venice, and soon after his arrival saw some of Dürer's woodcuts, brought thither as merchandise from Germany. Partly because he realized that there was a market for such things, and partly because he admired them, Marcantonio, as has already been said, made copies of them, signed them with Dürer's monogram and sold them as the works of Dürer's hand. Later, when Marcantonio copied other of Dürer's prints he added his own monogram. His success seems to have determined him to devote his life to engraving, and it is significant of all that he afterwards did, that he should have begun as a copyist and translator of another man's work, for he was to end copying and translating that of Raphael. From the first he seems to have been able to enter into the very heart and soul of greatness, Dürer's to begin with; Raphael's later on. To do this thing which is immeasurably rare is, in

itself, the proof of greatness. Marcantonio was possessed of that rarest essential, alike of the man who would practice art and the man who would understand and appreciate art, an understanding heart.

The print, "Man Asleep by a Wood" (Fig. 37), an early work, done perhaps while Marcantonio was in Bologna, in technique similar to Dürer's and altogether unlike that of Mantegna, inclines one to the belief that Marcantonio either was acquainted with Dürer's work before he left Bologna,

Fig. 37. Man Asleep by a Wood Marcantonio Raimondi.

or that the plate is of a later date than that usually ascribed to it. As Bartsch[1] says, it was probably done from a design of Francia's, and possibly from a painting, in which case it is a very characteristic bit of Marcantonio's work, in the sense that it is really a translation; the work of a translator-engraver. In the treatment of the figures, and especially in the pose of the sleeping man and the graceful fall of the woman's draperies, this little print foreshadowed the marvelously adequate renderings of

[1] "Le Peintre Graveur," par Adam Bartsch, 1867, page 330, Vol. XIV. IX. Sujets de Fantaisie, No. 438.

Raphael's paintings, which were later to come from this engraver's burin. In modeling the tree trunks he has shown some ability, but an ability in no degree equal to that of Dürer in similar passages, while the foliage shows him to have been wholly unable to produce those sparkling effects of light and shade which are the unfailing attributes of leafy masses, as well as their softness. Compare Dürer's "Adam and Eve" (Fig. 35). So,

Fig. 38. Lucretzia. Marcantonio Raimondi.

too, the forest lacks sense of depth and mystery. It is no more a forest than a row of tree trunks would be a forest, if set up in front of a dark curtain. We look *at* this forest. We look *into* Dürer's.

After studying some time in Venice Marcantonio went to Rome and here again we will let Vasari tell the story in his own words. "Arrived in Rome Marcantonio made a copper-plate engraving of a most beautiful design of Raphael's, the Roman Lucretzia (Fig. 38), namely, who

is destroying her life. This he executed in so fine a manner and with so much care that, the work having been carried by some friends of his to Raphael, the latter determined to permit some of his designs to be published by engravings." Herein was the beginning of those intimate relations which existed between the two men up to the day of Raphael's death in 1520. As to Marcantonio's abilities as a draughtsman, and incidentally as an engraver, further comment would be superfluous; Raphael determined to have him draw and engrave his designs on copper. Marcantonio worked directly from Raphael's sketches and drawings for his paintings, and often probably from drawings made especially for the purpose of engraving, i.e., as guides, in the sense of models to be copied, but comparatively little, during Raphael's life, from the finished paintings. Hind says: "Of the drawings furnished by Raphael to his engraver very few are authenticated, but these are sufficient to show how much was left to Marcantonio to elaborate and develop, and it is exactly in his wonderful sympathy and power in adaptation that his chief strength lies." Again, the understanding heart! Raphael frequently assisted Marcantonio, sometimes, there is reason to believe, even using the burin himself. After Raphael's death he translated, i.e., drew and engraved from the paintings. While occupied with the translation of the great painter's works Marcantonio accomplished his labor with that supreme intelligence which always accompanies genius, making it truly artistic, for, just in degree as an engraver's aim becomes, consciously or unconsciously, the transcribing, not so much the picture, not so much the physical facts in the picture, as, rather, his own sense and appreciation of them, does he become himself an artist. The judgment of Vasari is the judgment of posterity. Of Marcantonio's engraving it is said that "no artist since his time has so well adapted the stroke of the graver to forms, or has better understood depth, character, and correctness of outline." This is but saying that his engraving is first-rate drawing; a near equivalent for Raphael's own drawing. Understanding, depth, character, and correctness of outline were among the chief attributes of the central Italian schools of painting, and of the works of their, and the world's, masters, preëminently Raphael. Into the appreciation of these attributes Marcantonio entered completely and hence he became the perfect engraver of Raphael, and, in his engravings, ceased, in the vulgar sense, to be a copyist and became, in the finer and truest sense, an artist. Among his many prints none is better known per-

haps than the "Poetry" (Fig. 39) engraved after one of the ceiling frescos by Raphael in the Vatican. Poetry is represented allegorically, as a matron, laurel-crowned and winged, seated above the clouds and holding a lyre in one hand and a book in the other, while cherubs support tablets to left and right of her. Although the solidity of the figures, as well as the contours of their various members, are given with as great a degree of realism

Fig. 39. Poetry. Marcantonio Raimondi.

as is possessed by the similar parts in Dürer's "Melancholia" (Fig. 34), and, in spite of the fact that the curving, interlacing, and hatching of lines, and the faint shades produced by dots only, all suggest the German engraver's influence, there is in this print little or no attempt to render texture; no statement is made, so to speak, as to the nature of the materials of her robes; much less than in the "Melancholia" as to the character of the feathers in her wings.

The well-known engraving of a mother embracing her child (Fig. 40) is perhaps not the work of Marcantonio's burin. Some authorities have claimed absolute authenticity for it, while others deny that it is in any way referable to Marcantonio. For this very reason it is here referred

Fig. 40. Mother and Child. Anon. Italian Engraver (16th century).

to, because, if Raphael's, it is from one of the most exquisite designs which his mind ever conceived, or his hand drew, few, even of *his* works, the "Grand Ducal Madonna," for example, expressing such intense feeling combined with equally intense truth to nature; the homely and specific fact of motherhood and the universal fact of motherly affection. If the

print is not by the hand of Marcantonio it is by one of the men who were of the school that formed about the master, and learned from him how to engrave; "a school," as Hamerton says, "ennobled by many famous men." In this sense it is a worthy monument to Marcantonio's genius, for it shows that in him there was the temper of a great teacher, as well as genius; that he could teach others to do well what he himself could do surpassingly well, which constitutes a nature as rare among men as it is serviceable to humanity.

And now a little of Hans Holbein, the last in our group of the pre-eminent engravers, artist-draughtsmen of the Renaissance. He was born at Augsburg in 1497. He passed the best years of his life in England, and from the English rather than his own countrymen received most of his patronage. He began life in Bâle, where, for a dozen years, in order to eke out a livelihood, he made ornamental designs and illustrations for printers and publishers. This period saw the production of his famous picture, the "Meyer Madonna," and some of his best portraits, notably those of his friends, Melanchthon and Erasmus. To the latter Holbein owed much of his success in life, because through him he obtained from Henry VIII an invitation to go to England, together with the especial patronage of the chancellor and scholar, Sir Thomas More. In More's house at Chelsea Holbein made his home. He went to England in 1526, and, with the exception of two brief visits to Bâle, he remained there until his death.

Holbein is known to have been in accord with the tendencies of the Reformation, from his works, as well as from the records of the time. For instance, he engraved a print showing the sale of indulgences; one in which Christ figures as the true Light with the peasants following Him, and another, specially noted, which bears the date 1524, showing the Pope in grand procession, and Christ neglected and riding on an ass. He made several important sets of designs engraved on wood; the illustrations for Sir Thomas More's "Utopia" and Erasmus's "Praise of Folly," and, most important of all, the two sets of illustrations for the Bible, and the set known as the "Dance of Death." It is now a well-established fact that Holbein did not cut his designs on the wood blocks himself, but, after drawing them, left the actual cutting to another man, one Lutzelberger, for the most part. This is a matter which has caused much discussion and argument. The work proves the power of Lutzelberger as an

engraver and artist, and, in a measure, makes his relation to Holbein similar to that of Marcantonio to Raphael. With a series of coarse lines; with no suggestion of the mystery of distance or the infinity of natural detail; with no attempt to render textures; with no effects of light and shade beyond what can be obtained by a series of parallel lines of one tint throughout, Holbein's woodcuts suggest a wonderful amount of truth to life and nature. They were part of the great movement of the Reformation, as their author's purpose was to teach what he believed of vital import to rich and poor alike. Holbein designed, in the sense of composed, his pictures, for he did more than copy what he saw. The real meaning of the word design is too often forgotten, or misunderstood, both by artists and laity, in these days of so much which is misnamed realism. As has already been said, design, from *de* and *signum*, "from the mark," as its component parts signify, means the opposite of natural. It implies the arrangement of things, whether lines as in these woodcuts under consideration, or spots of color, as on wall paper, or folds in drapery, or plants in a garden bed; the arrangement of things by man's agency, as opposed to the arrangement of things naturally, or, as we say, by God's agency. The true greatness of art does not depend upon the amount of exact copying of nature, though the beginning of all art must be based upon that, but upon the number of thought-begetting memoranda of natural truths which the work of art offers to the beholder. The great designer, another way of saying the great artist, is he who arranges all the facts, every detail of form, color, shade, and shadow, after a fashion which he has conceived in his own mind. He fits the things of nature, in their natural semblance, into a pattern of *his own* making. Thus he *makes* his work of art, based on nature and, from one point of view, absolutely faithful to her, more than natural by adding the quality of design, or pattern, a labor of his own imagination. Reversely, he *makes* his work of art less than natural by taking away all such details as will tend to conceal the pattern upon which his picture is fashioned; the pattern or design of his own mind's conceiving. A real work of art at once acknowledges and declares its existence to have been drawn from the world of nature, while its very life is the completest proof that we can get of the power of the human mind to transcend nature. Inexpressible affection for the qualities of all natural things, joined with unbounded regard for the primal and eternal order on which the complex infinity of the natural rests, are characteristic

attributes of artistic minds. Proof of such affection and regard is given in the amount and sort of design which an artist manages to put into his work, together with the amount of beauty with which he represents in shorthand, so to speak, that infinite mass of detail which is nature. In fine, design is the mirroring forth in man's creations of his vision and understanding of that unswerving order and law in which nature and humanity have their primal existence, and from which they derive all that they possess of power or beauty. Design, in art, is the human recognition of the superhuman control of those things and conditions which, though everlasting, are in eternal change. In this sense design, which to the Italians meant drawing in the larger and inclusive way, as the sum of pictorial results obtainable with an instrument of the pencil type, meant much that composition does to us at the present day.

Holbein was one of the great preachers, as well as greatest artists, of his age, in that his care was to illuminate the Scriptures and to impress the necessity of decent living upon the people of his time. His cuts suggest little or no controversy about creeds and dogmas. They say, "thus Holbein read," and "thus he saw" in his daily rounds among men. Remember that the people for whom he wrought could not, many of them, read. Remember, too, that books were expensive luxuries for those few who could read.

In Holbein's Bible cut for "Daniel's Vision" (Fig. 41) mark the motion of the waves, particularly the wave with a breaking crest. If you have

Fig. 41. Daniel's Vision. Woodcut. Holbein.

ever seen a great wave of the sea breaking along its edge you will recognize the naked truthfulness of these half dozen black lines, as well as their absolutely unimitative, in the sense of realistic, quality. A perfect parallel to this wave, both for truth and power, couched in terms of monumental abstraction, a marvel of design on the one hand, and a miracle, as expressing the artist's comprehension of natural phenomena on the other, is the so-called "Great Wave" (Fig. 5) by Hokusai. Of races half the world apart, and in time separated by many scores of years, these two artists are absolutely one in those essentials which make for artistic greatness. Each sees in the breaking wave what is typical of all such waves whenever and wherever. Each looks into the heart of his subject, while in the picturing, drawing, engraving of that heart each retains his own individuality and thereby stamps his statement respecting universal truth with the seal of individual personality. The ordinary artist draws what he can of the physical body of his subject and therewith is moderately satisfied. The great artist does the same thing, but, in addition—upon this distinction rests the whole difference between respectable and great drawing—he depicts the heart of his subject. To put it in another way: through the medium of the outward and visible reality he makes it possible for us to know the inward and invisible reality. In doing so he proceeds upon the principle that all art is based on nature and must keep faith to her. The four beasts are a faithful yet imaginative illustration of the text which the keen-minded and sincerely believing Holbein wished to make the widespread possession of an illiterate and priest-ridden people. How utterly the spirit of such a work of art differs from that of Raphael, who, without Holbein's sincerity of purpose, gave his precious powers to painting a group of learned doctors disputing about the doctrine of transubstantiation at a time when Italy was growing daily more irreligious and corrupt. But in this connection recall another work of Raphael's, one in which his subject is akin to Holbein's "Vision of Daniel," the "Vision of Ezechiel." On a canvas not two feet square he set down the elements of grandeur and space in a way that made him peerless, and keeps him so. And yet while Raphael did this for a single rich man, Holbein accomplished, in some respects, a similar act for a whole race of men. It is not intended to decry Raphael. It would be foolish to attempt a comparison of two such men as he and Holbein. But this fact is to be emphasized, namely, that engraving, and first of all wood engraving, multiplied draw-

ing, put great art within the reach of the poor. Count Vincent of Bologna could afford a Raphael, the "Vision of Ezechiel"; the peasant might have a print from Holbein's block of the "Vision of Daniel." What has been said of the wave in the "Daniel's Vision" is almost equally applicable to the raging sea and the gale clouds of Holbein's "The Skipper" (Fig. 42). Death has just come aboard. He grasps the snapping mast, snapped really by the wind, the same power which has rent the sail to tatters; he, the invisible, made known to the terrified sailors by these, the certain visible and natural signs of their approaching dissolu-

Fig. 42. The Skipper. Woodcut. Holbein.

tion. In another of this same set, the "Dance of Death" (Fig. 43), the cut entitled "Gradientes in superbia"—"Walking in Pride"—Holbein declares that rank and riches are no protection against death. He shows Death taking a queen's arm with one hand, and with the other pointing to an open grave in the very midst of her path, as, attended by ladies, she crosses a public square. The technique is as simple as that of the Daniel (Fig. 41), not a crosshatching in the entire subject. The lines are firm and exceedingly matter-of-fact, and they are broad and black. Each is made to tell all that it can, but not one of them is forced to exceed the limitations prescribed by its inherent qualities of thickness and blackness.

What Holbein could accomplish when he worked with a more pliable medium, red crayon, the whole world knows from his Windsor portraits (Fig. 9).

The "Dance of Death" series was published in 1538. There were forty-one pieces in all, and each has a text and a verse. The book was dedicated to Jeanne, abbess of the convent of St. Peter at Lyons, a passage from the dedication of which is as remarkable for the true and just criticism it contains as for its naïve and ancient theological flavor. "For his sorrowful histories, with their descriptions severely versified, excite such admiration in the beholders that they think the figures of Death appear as if quite alive, and the living as if dead. Which makes me think that Death, fearing that excellent painter would paint him so much alive that he should no longer be feared as Death, and that for this reason he himself would become immortal; for this very cause hastened so much his days that he could not finish several cuts."

Fig. 43. Gradientes in Superbia. Woodcut. Holbein.

CHAPTER V.

THE THEORY AND PROCESS OF ETCHING—REMBRANDT, VAN DYCK AND CLAUDE LORRAIN

ETCHING comes next chronologically. We will begin with the technical principles of the art, comparing them briefly with those of the sister arts of line and wood engraving. It is not known just when, or where, or by whom etching was invented. That it had become a common medium of artistic expression and was greatly valued in Holland, France, and Germany early in the seventeenth century is a fact. The popularity of the process was due in part, no doubt, to its ease; a process which involves little training of hand, or unusual strength, as compared with the difficult and laborious mastery of the burin. In its results, the actual prints taken from etched metal plates, it is in all respects the equal of engraving; in some regards superior to engraving. Through the medium of etching many a design, drawing, be it remembered, of priceless worth has been given in considerable numbers to the world; design or drawing which had never appeared at all if the artist who conceived and drew it had been forced to publish it through the difficult and expensive medium of burin engraving or the coarser medium of wood engraving.

Etching is the Anglicized Dutch word *etsen*, akin to our "eat." Technically it means to eat away or corrode with an acid. The line which in a line engraving is ploughed out by pushing the burin over the metal plate is, in etching, eaten out gradually by the action of an acid; usually nitric acid upon copper. Many different metals have been employed, and many acids. Rembrandt not infrequently used vinegar, and Albert Dürer

etched on iron. In its simplest conditions the technique of etching is as follows: A polished copper plate is covered evenly with a very thin coat of some waxlike compound called ground, or grounding, variously made, but always possessed of two essential characteristics. First, the compound or ground shall be soft; malleable enough to allow of cutting it away with very little pressure. In other words, so soft that one can draw with a needle or other sharp instrument in the wax, leaving fine, clean-edged lines. Second, the compound or ground shall be impervious to the action of acid. A common way of getting this impervious, waxlike compound evenly spread on the copper plate is to take a small ball of the ground, say the size of a walnut, and wrap it in a thin piece of sheer cloth, using the edges of the cloth, drawn tight in the fingers, as a handle. In the left hand hold the copper plate—nippers are ordinarily used—over a small flame. As the metal grows warm the compound, the ground, can be rubbed over it, the ingredients melting through the sheer cloth. Thus, a thin, impervious, waxlike coat or grounding is given, in even thickness, to the surface of the copper. This is the first step. When successfully taken the etcher-artist is ready to begin his drawing. This is the second step. He may be an original artist, or a translator, as much in etching as in engraving. With a needle—Rembrandt at times used the tine of a fork—with any sharp metal instrument, the artist draws his design on or in the wax or ground. Wherever he makes a line he takes away the ground and, obviously, bare or naked copper is revealed. Let us assume that the drawing is done. Picture clearly what this means. A design, a drawing, composed of fine lines has been cut in the thin coating or ground and is left showing as exposed copper. We are now ready for the third step in the process. It is known as biting; the actual process of incising, or furrowing the lines into the metal; what is done with the burin in line engraving, and done, remember, with great manual difficulty. The copper plate is immersed in a bath of dilute acid. This at once begins to bite into, corrode, etch, really furrow out, the lines of the design, which are naked copper, remember. In other words, wherever the metal is unprotected by the ground, wherever a line has been drawn with the needle, there the acid begins to work. When the artist thinks that this biting, the actual etching process, has gone far enough, and thinking right upon this subject is largely the result of practical experience, he lifts the plate out of the bath and washes it until he is sure that no trace of the acid re-

mains, and consequently no more biting can take place. Next he cleans the ground from his plate—melting, in some form, is the usual way—and then he has his polished copper surface into which his drawing, his design, has been furrowed. In other words, he has a metal engraving, the lines of which, like all lines in metal engravings, are incised lines. Thus, with ease, by means of an acid he gets what the line engraver with the burin can attain only with extreme difficulty. The next and final step is printing the plate. This differs in no wise from the printing of any other engraved plate.

Thus it will be seen that the inventor of etching greatly widened the horizon of artistic technique. He made highly desirable things, metal prints, easy of manufacture, and hence comparatively inexpensive. The process is far easier than that of wood engraving, simple as that is compared to burin engraving. Further, the design on copper can be more delicate than the design on wood, the inherent nature of the material and tools making this both legitimate and possible. This means that finer lines and more delicate chiaroscuro are within the artist's easy reach. Finally, the copper plate itself is more durable than the wood block. This means that more impressions can be taken.

Let us return for a little to the actual process of making an etching. Let us assume that the etched plate is in the condition that has been described after the biting process. The artist will now prove his work. This means he will have a print taken from the plate, so that he may see how his work looks on paper; see if he approves of it or if he finds changes, additions, or erasures, which can be made to advantage. Thus this first proving print is a "proof." The same, of course, is done with burin engraving and with wood. In the first proof of the head by Manesse[1] (Fig. 44) see, as he must have seen, that while the lines are full of character and highly expressive, the thing, looked on as a picture, a portrait, is incomplete. It lacks that intimate connection of the parts which results in a whole, and it lacks definition, not to say clearness within the parts. As a drawing it is vague. Such is our opinion of the first proof, and such, no doubt, was the artist's. As painters say, the work in this state is not "convincing," meaning that the picture lacks those qualities which give the coveted look of verisimilitude. This can be had by the addition of more lines; lines of definition, especially above the eyes, and lines of

[1] "Drawing and Engraving," by Philip Gilbert Hamerton. London, 1892.

Fig. 44. Etching by Manesse.

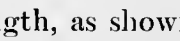
shade and shadow, especially on and beneath the ruff. The artist now takes another step in his technical process—Manesse took another—but one which involves no new principle. All of principle that underlies the art of etching on the purely technical side has been recorded. The artist covers those lines on his plate which he does not wish deepened, or strengthened, with a compound that possesses the two characteristics which are essential to the etching ground as already described. This compound is called stopping-out varnish. The lines thus stopped out are rendered secure against further biting. Those not so stopped out are subject

to further biting. The plate is then replaced in the acid bath. After sufficient time has elapsed, it is again lifted, washed, and cleaned. At this point we are ready for a second proof. Of Manesse's head we have this in No. 2, evidently a more satisfactory production than No. 1, the first proof. In other words, we have the second proof. But improvements are still possible. So the artist again stops out some, and further bites other parts of his plate to get greater depth of shade and shadow where he desires them.

When he feels that he has carried the real etching process, the actual biting, to its utmost, he is likely to add some finishing work, light touches, delicate and shallow scratches made on the copper with an exceedingly fine point. These lines, of course, add to the final form of the plate. Such work, because it is done on the plate, dry, i.e., when the plate is no longer to be wet with another acid bath, and because it is added with a point,—such work is called "dry point," or "dry point etching."

At this juncture the plate, as complete as is in the power of the artist to make it, is ready for printing in numbers, and being given to the public; to be "published." No. 3 is a print of the condition, or state, of the finished plate. This "first state," as it is called, should signify, though it does not always do so, a print from the plate after it is perfectly satisfactory to the artist, and before it has begun to wear, as in time it must, going through the press; especially if the metal be a soft one, such as copper, and be not plated with a harder metal for protection, as has of late years become customary. No more need here be said of proofs and states, published or unpublished, "before letters" or "after," "open-lettered" or "closed." They constitute an important subject, both artistically and commercially, but a subject that is not really, in any essential way, connected with the art of etching or the art of engraving, looked at from our present standpoint. It is a matter thoroughly treated of in any technical work on engraving and etching, and in most histories of these subjects.

The respective characteristics of burin or graver lines and of etched lines must be considered; first, as they appear on the metal plate; then as they look in the print. Fig. 45 shows a metal plate, cross section, with the depression or furrow made by the burin; the graver-made line. It is clear-cut on the edges and of the shape of the instrument with which

it was cut or ploughed. It is a V-shaped line. Deep or shallow, it is clean-cut. On these qualities depend the wonderful clearness and definiteness of the lines in first-rate engravings or line prints. They are, too, the very qualities which give that hard, overaccurate and cold character to many "line engravings," so-called; character which justifies their being regarded as exercises in the frigid. For early engravers, and for men of the great calibre of Dürer and Marcantonio, whose work aimed at absolute perfection of outline, with, as a rule, a comparatively meagre gamut of tones, the burin line answered every need. Fig. 46 shows the section of a printed, graver or burin line; the actual ink line upon the paper. It is, of course, the reverse of the metal line or incision which held the ink for printing. One other point calls for notice in this connection. The engraved line always has a more or less remarkable degree of continuity. In other words, its course is comparatively steady, and of a flowing or sweeping nature. This is due to the fact that the burin is pushed, and its "nose" is kept, comparatively speaking, deep in the plate. The pressure required to keep it so makes it relatively easier to guide. It is natural, moreover, that the pressure to start with should be light and again grow light as the end of the line is approached. Thus we find that engraved lines very commonly taper at the ends because, on the plate, they are shallow and thin at the ends, growing deeper and wider, and remaining so, in the bulk of their length, with the result that they are light and narrow at the ends while heavy and black in the bulk of their printed length, as shown in Fig. 47  . Such necessary conditions tend towards a mechanical sort of recurrent accuracy which often, in steel engravings, results in stupid mannerisms and insipid translation of great painting. It was just this that Dürer and Mantegna escaped and Marcantonio, to a great extent, but later in his life more rarely. Their own genius or, if copying, as with Marcantonio, the genius of a master was never dimmed by labored or affected technique. In other words, they never forgot the thing they were doing in the thought of how they were doing it; a state of mind that later on made deadly so much engraving which, for technique alone, is beyond doubt wonderful, but as the conveyancer of thoughts or the arrester and vehicle of inspired or inspiring moments in the life of nature, or the life of man, is worse than useless and becomes little less than a mockery to those who feel deeply, see clearly, think justly, and imagine nobly. We are all acquainted with engravings of

this sort and not many of us care for them. It is an instance in which natural taste is artistic salvation. Cultivation of mind, and taste, too, comes with our studied effort to explain our dislikes as well as our likes. But we should not imagine that no room is to be allowed for the personal equation in such connections. Again and again, however, it is certain that the personal equation will be found to be little more than a sentiment, and that we think we care for a picture because of intrinsic merit when, in reality, the real cause lies in some external sentiment connected with the picture. We need have no quarrel with sentiment only as we mistake it for something else, and so fool ourselves, which always implies the longest remove possible from true culture.

Look now at the etched line in cross section on the plate itself, Fig. 48 and printed on paper, Fig. 49 . These drawings are not made to scale, and so do not show the fact that the etched line is often less deep than the engraved. As a rule it is so, although there may be, and are, exceptions. The drawing shows clearly the round section characteristic of the etched line as utterly different from the angular section characteristic of the engraved line. The roundness is due to the corroding effect of the acid on the copper, the acid, of course, eating in at the sides as soon as it has eaten deep enough for the line to have sides. Neither has the etched line that clean-cut, sharp edge which is so characteristic of the engraved line. Further, it usually lacks the steady, even, onward flow of the graver line, being drawn with a point which only touches the surface of the metal, hence moves with more or less natural unsteadiness and resultant charm, as compared with the graver, which, as has been shown, often gets an unattractive steadiness and highly mechanical character from the very fact that its nose is kept bedded in the plate. As a matter of fact there is some analogy in the likeness of a line drawn with a hard lead on Bristol board and the engraved line; some analogy between the line drawn with a soft lead on a fine grade of Whatman paper and the etched line. The etcher holds his needle as he holds his pencil. This results in a certain amount of tremulousness of touch. This far more than compensates for any loss of evenness, by the greater freedom of movement which makes possible so many varieties and such varied direction of line. In the greater freedom of possible effects, producible by the greater possible variety of touch and line, the etcher found his advantage over the engraver. In the ease of the process he found a new and direct means for

permanent recording of fact and meaning of fact, as such made their appeal to him. No more elastic medium of artistic expression has ever been discovered. It is no wonder that so many of the very greatest men, from Rembrandt and Claude to Turner and Whistler, have gladly embraced it and, in it, added to the old world of nature a new world of art; a world, too, of easily multiplied drawing.

It has been shown how and why the graver line tapers. The typical etched line, printed, does not taper as a rule, though it may. Fig. 50 ——— shows its characteristic form. This is so because the needle will remove as much of the etching ground at the first as at the last touch. Etched lines can be made to taper, widen and diminish throughout their length at the will of the artist. This is done by turning the needle so that it will take off more or less ground as it moves over the copper. In passing, notice Fig. 51 . It shows the raised line of a wood-engraved plate, a wood block. It has something of the character of the typical etched line when printed, i.e., even width throughout its length. Finally, before taking up the subject of etched prints, etchings, we must know that engraving is often added to etching; that both often appear on the same plate and, hence, in the same print, an etched line being retouched, or deepened, or smoothed, with the burin. In fact, etching often has, and yet does, serve as a foundation for the graver, i.e., as a matter of time and labor saving. The respective character of the two sorts of line is so different, however, that they cannot be put together on the same plate without producing a more or less disjointed effect, which may be, and often is, very adroitly concealed. This is shown by some of the famous translator engravings of Baron Desnoyers, and in the work of many men of much less reputation. Finally, a great deal which passes for line engraving, and has for years, is pure etching. Many of the so-called engravings after Turner, are etchings.

Line engraving has been practiced little by artists of the first rank, and much by artists and craftsmen of inferior qualities, poor copyists playing the rôle of commonplace translators. The majority of line engravings with which we are familiar contain little that is notable in the way of translation and almost nothing that is original. We have come to care nothing for our engravings, often rightly, though we do not sufficiently distinguish the good from the bad. Hence the technically fine Landseers,

the highly respectable "Auroras" by Raphael Morghen, and the "Sistine Madonnas" and "Belle Jardinières" by Steinla and Desnoyers, together with the silly "Voyages of Life," the insipid "Floras," deathbed scenes of Daniel Webster, and companies of authors, "Irving and His Friends," have, all together, found their way into upper rooms and garrets. It is, however, a great mistake to suppose that reproductive engraving is, as some maintain, a contemptible art, for it is by no means such. Acquaintance with the masterly work of the French seventeenth-century portrait engravers, the reproductive engravers of the school of Rubens, and those wonderful men who in the nineteenth century gave their unique abilities to translating the landscapes of Turner into black and white—the exquisite illustrations to the "Poems" and the "Italy" of Samuel Rogers, or such a series as Turner's "Rivers of France"—acquaintance with these things, and many similar to them, will soon disabuse an open and beauty-loving mind of the notion that reproductive engraving is of necessity an inferior art. The hitherto unpublished "Farne Island," plate by Willmore after Turner, the frontispiece of this book, bears testimony to the assertion. It remains true, none the less, that the work of the great painter-gravers and painter-etchers is incomparably finer.

The consummate etcher of the seventeenth century, and of all centuries, is Rembrandt. His influence upon etching was even greater than Raphael's upon line engraving, because he constantly etched his own designs. His etchings *are* his drawings. His etched work displays the finest qualities of which the art is capable. Rembrandt was the son of a miller and his home was near Leyden, on the Rhine, hence his name Rijn. He was born in 1606. This man's preëminent power as an artist lay in his wonderful control of light and shade; control or mastery which has led many people to think that he sacrificed the loveliness and truth of color to his passion for appearances of solidity which is got by light and shade. Such people are not familiar with Rembrandt's best painting, or, if they are, have allowed the claptrap of guide books and popular criticism to blind them to facts. He painted dark, it is true. That he was a chiaroscurist is true. But at his best, which was his ordinary and usual, he filtered pure color into the depths of his deepest shadows and most hidden recesses, until he made "darkness visible" with its own light and color. His darkness sparkles more than most men's light, and his light, witness "The Night Watch," blazes. Rembrandt's luminous shadow,

color amid gloom, and light in darkness, all seen as mere blackness by ordinary men, was so copied by them in the hope that they, too, might gain popularity and fame. The faults of a very great painter often work deadly hurt to the painters of his time who can, being but ordinary, follow his faults alone. It was so with Rembrandt. It was so with Michelangelo. And this is why even the great museums, not to mention innumerable rich private collections, are so well supplied with second-rate Rembrandts; the most inferior, perhaps, of all second-rate masterpieces, nine out of ten of them copies, forged or not matters not.

But with his etchings it is different. In these he had no call to use color and hence does not conceal it even from those dull eyes that cannot discern it amidst his painted light and shade. By light and shade he often gives reality, quite beyond what is commonly taken for real, to the known aspects of the face of man and nature. And all this was within the compass of the etcher's art; art that is so easy to practice; so direct; so suited to the rendering of chiaroscuro in broad masses as it veils or discovers the details and wonders of nature, or the expression and meaning in faces. He was Carlyle's "gifted man," the one who sees the essential point and leaves all the rest aside as surplusage; discerner of "the true likeness, not the false superficial one." If ever in art the essential was grasped and the irrelevant cast out, it is so in the etchings of Rembrandt. If ever a medium of expression was suited to such a mode of procedure it was Rembrandt's etching, into which the dry point often entered; etchings that have "the effect of pictures rather than of engravings." Pictures, it should be added, which make us think of much more than they show us, while they rivet our attention upon what they *do* show us. This is an approximate definition of a really great picture. This little head (Fig. 52), a minor work, if by Rembrandt at all, shows marvelous precision and economy of line; no stroke of the etching needle wasted even though such strokes are easy to make. How accurate, yet free, is the suggestion of the curves and waves of hair, without the least attempt to imitate the impossible multiplicity of hairs; hair drawn as in Holbein's red-chalk Windsor portraits; a sketch, this, and not a finished drawing as they are, yet absolutely right so far as it goes. It has all the precious qualities of a great drawing. It is a work of pure etching; one into which no dry point has been admitted and, as such, characteristic of his earlier style. The next is Rembrandt's "Landscape with a Ruined Tower" (Fig. 53), a

Fig. 52. Etching by Unknown Artist. Sometimes attributed to Rembrandt.

work of art beyond praise and above competition in its massive breadth and sustained unity of effect. It is not exquisite. It was not meant to be so.

Fig. 53. Etching, Square Tower. Rembrandt

It is robust. It is homely. It is as far from all things classical as its Dutch thatched cottages are from the Parthenon. It is like the Duke of Wellington as Tennyson described him, "in simplicity sublime." It is one of those things in which the eye sees what it brings with it the power of seeing; as in Beethoven, or Bach, the ear hears what it brings with it the power of hearing; as in Hamlet or the Merchant, the heart feels what the heart brings with it the power to feel. Wretched the lot of the man who, in such works, can hear only the struck notes, or feel only the outward movements of the play, or see only the meshed lines. As a drawing this etched landscape is a work of consummate art. As an object of art it is of the things which have a fixed market minimum and a fixed value exceeding all market prices in the appreciation of discriminating men. It has been called the "last word" in landscape art. This cannot be accepted, but if, for landscape art, there shall ever be "seven last words" it may well be one of them. About the name of the man who etched it there is, as Ruskin said of Titian, the acknowledgment of all great men that he is greater than they. If we can see nothing in such work; if we can hear nothing in Beethoven or Bach; if we can find nothing in the Merchant or Hamlet—judging by the characters and reputation of the men who have seen much, heard much, and found much through many generations—we shall be forced to acknowledge the fault our own, and, to say the least, it is far from flattering to have to acknowledge to oneself that he has not part or holding, of any sort, in those things which the intelligent world has held vastly precious and found delight in for a long time.

The "Death of the Virgin" is among the most remarkable, as well as most characteristic of Rembrandt's scriptural groups. It is one of the great things of Christian art. In it that breadth which means the suppression rather than the omission of details, is seen at its best. The atmosphere is almost pompous. At times it almost seems as if the dignity of the subject has passed over into unconscious caricature. It is one of Rembrandt's etchings to be admired in the sense of marveled at, but not one which generally commands deep affection. Not so his landscape called "The Three Trees" (Fig. 54), dating from 1643. Here we have the master at his best as depicting the overwhelming sense of the vastness of out-of-doors; the great height of the as yet unclouded sky, clear at the right; the heavy, oncoming shower clouds at the left, with the black

Fig. 54. The Three Trees. Etching by Rembrandt.

slanting lines of the rain which seem to stream down from the very zenith; the foreground pool not yet wholly overshadowed; the plain cut up into numberless fields and dying, far off upon the horizon, into a distant town; bigness everywhere, solid reality and fine detail fused into a little whole of intensest truth, raised above common retrospect by the power of art. Every line of this marvelous transcript of nature is a line of Rembrandt's own drawing; every touch upon the copper is the outpouring of his awe and affection for his chosen subject direct from his needle's point. It is one of those consummate works in which reality and imagination, fact and interpretative vision have completely merged; in a word, the literal and the poetic become one, as they do always in every work of supreme art. Nor should such consideration keep us from discovering afresh, with ever increasing delight, the placing of each line in relation to its neighbor;

a matter of patterning as it were, wrought out touch by touch, for pure joy of doing, *con amore.* And those three rugged, wind-blown trees which give this print its name are tree portraits in the sense that Rembrandt has managed to seize not only their living likeness, but also that unique and particular aspect of each individual which nature never repeats. This is portraiture. It matters not if it be of the face of nature or the face of man. And in such portraiture, here, and in whatever other instance, if it be great, we always have, and must have, the mind as well as the body portrayed. Rembrandt saw, as Wordsworth saw, the facts of nature to be

> "Types and symbols of Eternity,
> Of first and last and midst and without end,"

and *so* he drew them. Hence the ever increasing fame and the undying influence of his works; of such a work as his "Three Trees."

A more characteristic piece of Rembrandt's etched landscape, more characteristic in that the sky is unworked, whereas in the "Three Trees" it is elaborately worked, is the so-called "Gold-weigher's Field" (Fig. 7). The same high sky and far horizon mark this famous little picture as they do the "Three Trees," but the simplicity of method in this is not less a characteristic of Rembrandt than the complexity of method in the other. Here we see what genius can make of a commonplace bit of rural landscape, touching it throughout with that wonder glow which is the "enchanted boon of art." And again, here, as everywhere and always in Rembrandt's etchings, are the signs of his unbounded satisfaction in line as such, and his unsurpassed capacity for making lines tell more than they actually depict, which is, in fine, the definition of a real artist-draughtsman.

One source of beautiful effect possible to etching and much valued by Rembrandt was what is known as burr. This means the minute bank or dike which is left upon either side of the incision where the needle, the dry point, is drawn across the plate. In printing, these minute banks or dikes hold a little ink and this, as the paper is pressed down upon the plate in the process of printing, gives to the surface of the print a certain velvety depth of tone which is very rich. With burr it is possible to get such depths of chiaroscuro as can be had in no other way. On the other

hand, as the burr is so slight it takes but few printings to entirely destroy it. This is the case with all but the very early, and now extremely rare plates of Rembrandt's etching. When the burr is gone, the deeper etched lines remain, and it is from the plates in this condition that most of the etchings have been printed, naturally. The effect of burr is really that of a veil of chiaroscuro added to the etching beneath, an effect, as Rembrandt used it in his best portraits, and in such magnificent works as the so-called "Large Crucifixion," "The Three Crosses," and as Turner, nearly two centuries later, used it in his "Liber Studiorum," beyond praise and almost beyond credence, even when the eyes are fixed upon it. Because it will not reproduce satisfactorily, and because it does not pertain directly to line drawing, the subject of this book, in its relations to engraving, no effort has been made to show others of Rembrandt's etchings than those produced wholly, or for the most part, by the use of pure line, together with hatched line shading. More, finally, of the truth about Rembrandt is to be found in a few lines of Mr. A. M. Hind than is usually contained in whole pages on this artist. "But in the range of his genius Rembrandt still stands alone. Let him handle the most momentous scene from scripture, a landscape, a piece of genre, the slightest study of still life—all alike are illuminated by a power which never fails to pierce to the heart of things." Such, truly, was this pre-eminent draughtsman, artist-etcher.

A single man stands beside Rembrandt, and he in but a single branch of the art of their great time, Van Dyck, master of human portraiture. This splendid painter conceived the idea of making a series of portraits of the famous men of his day, and, further, the plan of publishing these portraits in the medium of etching, which he felt that he could manage with his own hand because of the ease of technique. However, the public which was used to the ultra-exquisite work in line, the burin engraving done by a school of engravers inspired and supported by Rubens as Marcantonio and his school had been by Raphael, did not care for the—simple, direct, and crude, his public thought them—etchings of Van Dyck. And Van Dyck, the adored of fashion and a profound respecter of worldly success, seeing that his etchings were not really popular, soon gave over the idea, leaving his superb canvases to be reproduced in the aforesaid ultra-exquisite line engraving of Rubens's all-fashionable school. But from Van Dyck's own hand, holding the needle, we have eighteen etched por-

traits[1]—five, every touch etched by the master himself; six, entirely so etched, but with a graver background added later; seven, partly engraved, and finished by some hand other than Van Dyck's. The Van Dyck portrait of Lucas Vorsterman (Fig. 55), one of the greatest of translator-engravers, and probably the chief member of the school that we

Fig. 55. Lucas Vorsterman. Etching by Van Dyck.

[1]Van Dyck's are "among the most masterly plates produced in the whole history of portrait etching. In fact, in spite of the limitations of his practice of the art, Van Dyck has no rival as an etcher of portraits except Rembrandt." "Van Dyck," by A. M. Hind. The *Print Collectors Quarterly*, February, 1915.

have just said was founded by Rubens and supported by engraving his works, is a model of what the best of such things can be. Economy and precision of touch equal to what is seen here have not been attained since, except by Whistler, and by him but rarely. Concentration of thought is an expressive phrase for describing this wonderful portrait; and not less so is unity of intellectual intent. Before Van Dyck portrait etching was scarcely known, and, since Van Dyck, has never been better done, and, as well, only at the hands of a very few men; Rembrandt chiefly, and Whistler, constituting the bulk of these exceptions. If ever work deserved to be called brilliant, this portrait does. On the other hand, no work, not even Rembrandt's most highly finished portrait, was ever sounder. Van Dyck's simplicity of method is as astounding as Rembrandt's complexity. Before us sits the man, Lucas Vorsterman himself, and, in the way that he is set before us, we have the most evident assertion of the peculiar and individual character of Van Dyck himself. If ever there was a work of style in the sense "style is of the man himself," we have it here. Lucas Vorsterman lives before our eyes, and in him, as he here appears, Van Dyck lives. It is here as it is in Rembrandt's portrait of his mother, or in that tremendous portrait of Coppernol, the writing master, for a good impression of which a small fortune is not a large price; it is here, as it is in all great art, the etcher's included, the artist is the man who has the power, as has been insisted on more than once in these pages, to see to the very heart of his subject, joined by the further power of compelling his chosen medium to say what he sees, and what he thinks about what he sees. It is by coming to know such portraits as the best of Rembrandt and Van Dyck; by learning to appreciate such a portrait as Van Dyck's of Lucas Vorsterman, that one comes to understand the profound significance of Samuel Butler's statement that "a great portrait is always more a portrait of the painter than the painted." By their works they shall be known, implies a vast deal of comprehension of the meaning of that all-important quality of great art called style; quality which sets those works which possess it everlastingly apart from all other similar work; quality distinguishing Beethoven and crowning him prince among composers; distinguishing Dante, and Michelangelo, and Wordsworth, and crowning them princes of their arts; quality which preëminently distinguishes the artists, Rembrandt and Van Dyck, better illustration of which quality cannot be cited than the etched

portrait of Lucas Vorsterman, for it is a work of convincing truth as to the man's look while he lived, and not less convincing as to Van Dyck's individual genius for grasping those features which personally characterized this particular individual, though in the eyes of casual observers they may only be the features common to all men.

We must now turn our thoughts somewhat back in point of time and consider Albert Dürer as an etcher. His earliest dated etching belongs to 1515. Of this but few impressions are known. Next come five etchings done on iron and, in many respects, rather coarse, as naturally they must be since the action of acid upon iron will not give as clear or clean biting to lines as it will on a finer-grained metal such as copper. Of these etchings the best and most famous is "The Great Cannon" (Fig. 56), in which Dürer is seen, in some respects, at his ablest; especially, for example, in the landscape considered as a whole, and in details such as the arrangement of the lines which, by curving and bending, define the shape and give the look of solidity to the great tree trunk. Never was

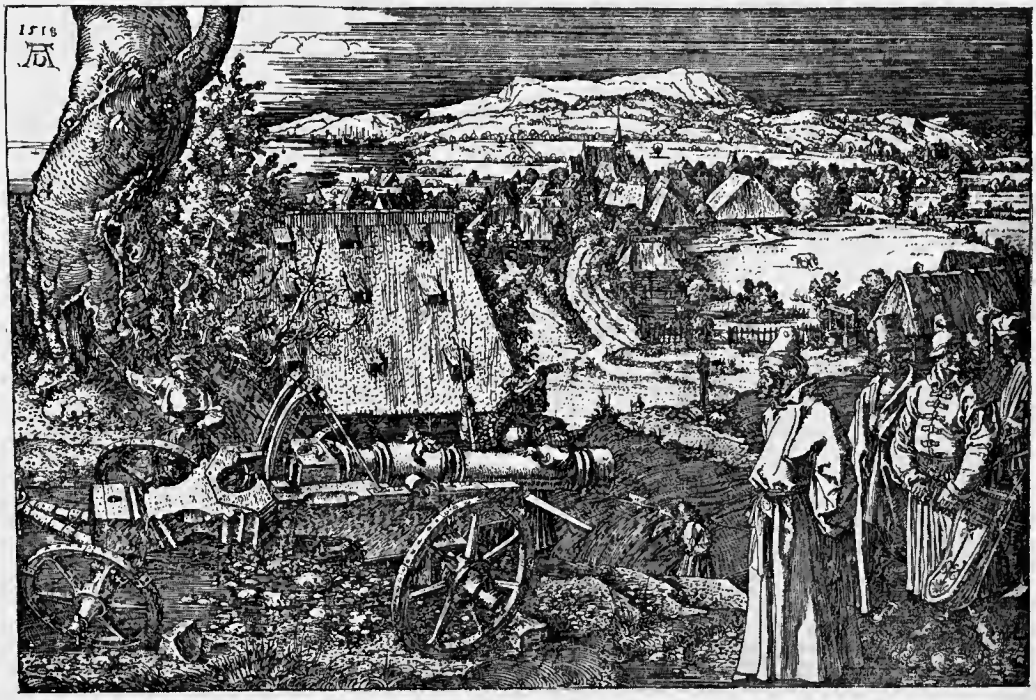


Fig. 56. The Great Cannon. Etching by Albert Dürer.

there truer evidence of an artist's delight in the placing and ordering of line for its own sake, as well as for the sake of the subject. This two-fold view of line is the invariable view of the greatest draughtsmen at all times. A more interesting, as well as more northern, i.e., distinguished from Italian, or Gothic piece of carefully arranged literalness was probably never produced. The manner of setting the horizon hills white against a dark sky, and the middle-ground village dark against the light hills,[1] and the way, in the foreground, that he alternates light space with dark, keeping a very complex subject from being in the least confused, all these, attributes of the best design, are added to the most painstaking regard for exact likeness of detail. If "The Great Cannon" is not, in an abstract sense, beautiful, and it is not generally so regarded, it is none the less noble in a very concrete sense; a thing which cannot be too carefully studied if we wish to get at the true meaning of late Gothicism and comprehend it as a phase of art world-wide in its separation from rejuvenated, yet in the main original, classicism; such classicism as Raphael's earlier backgrounds exhibit.

A brief discussion of the difference between the much vexed terms, romantic and classic, as applicable to the art of pictures as to the art of letters, is essential to what follows. In the main, up at least to the opening of the seventeenth century, a close parallel is discoverable between the general tendency of northern or Gothic art, the homely and literal art of exact likeness-making; between the art of Dürer and the art of Rembrandt;—a close parallel between this art, taken as a whole, its aims and methods, and what is meant by romantic art. By classic a very different artistic content is understood; one expressed in utterly different fashion and by widely different methods. The spirit of romantic art is essentially the spirit of realism. That of classic art is essentially the spirit of artificiality; an artificiality that has as its aim a legitimate exaggeration of natural beauty and natural grandeur; an art that would, in a word, "paint the rose." The former makes no attempt to apprehend or display abstract beauty. It is satisfied with the humble and commonplace, and with deriving from them a true inspiration. It accepts things as they are in life and nature, and it gives us Rembrandt's beggars and the rough charm of his square tower landscape (Fig. 53); romantic art of a very high

[1]Dürer's woodcut, "The Visitation" (Fig. 32), is altogether similar in these respects to "The Great Cannon" (Fig. 56).

order. The latter insists upon the pomp and magnificence of life and nature. It is of Italian origin and Roman descent. It loves the ruin's splendor; the shattered temple with its elegant Corinthian columns. It seeks gracefully formed trees. It admits only what is more or less regular; at least, what is according to rule. It aims at balance, and rhythm, and all those qualities which we expect in pictures, landscapes, or portraits, which are included under the general term "elegant." Precision and order are its corner stones and a lovely, often glorious artificiality is its aim and end. Of the one Rembrandt is arch master. Of the other no man was ever more completely master than the great Claude Lorrain (Fig. 17), Frenchman by birth, and of humble origin; cook by trade, who, very young, went to Rome, turned artist, and became thoroughly Italianized. He stands to this day the first and foremost representative of the so-called classic style in landscape. He was one of the earliest of pure landscape painters and he will remain, to all time, one of the greatest. He was born in 1600.

Like the other artists of his day Claude found etching a satisfactory and enticing method for permanent artistic expression; for setting down many a lovely thought about nature; thoughts cast into beautiful rhythmic mould and balanced masses. He was, in painting, probably the first man to attempt the representation of the sun in the midheavens with all the consequent effects of light and luminous depth of skies; calm glory of high noon; the fading or waxing beauty of a clear sunset or a clearer dawn. In his etched landscapes he was perhaps the first, and, in point of success, he has scarcely yet been rivaled, to get varying effects of atmosphere expressed and to make permanent in art the wonderful, always changing, fascinations of luminous haze; the hot haze of a clear noon, or the moist haze and wreathing mists of twilight and sunrise.

Among Claude's forty etched plates the "Cow Herd" is one of the best known; a thing universally considered precious though it is very rarely to be found in a well-printed state. Even more characteristic of Claude than the "Cow Herd,"—especially elegant in its composition, the acme of rhythm and balance, with its central tree mass and pendant side masses; its central dancing peasant and pendant dancing side figures, though not so balanced as to be tiresome and not so graceful as to be unreal or insipid,—is the etching known as a "Fête champêtre." Compare the etching, i.e., the etched drawing of Claude, with any etching by the comparatively famous Dutch etcher, Anthony Waterloo, an etcher

deserving much credit for good tree drawing and delicate detail, or with that of the near-great Ruisdael (Fig. 57), and we may see what art loses when the artist has no conception of a whole, much less of a great whole, apart from details, such as Rembrandt and Claude never failed to have. With them the whole is always vastly more important than any of the parts. So is it always with artists of first rank and so it is not with men of the second rank, no matter how talented. Look with care at this fine example of Ruisdael's etching (Fig. 57), a cottage on a hill in the woods. It is one,

Fig. 57. Cottage on a Hill. Etching by Ruisdael.

less than a dozen in all, of the plates he etched; a splendid study of trees and foliage, and a forerunner, but a confused forerunner (Fig. 58), of Turner's incomparable "Æsecus and Hesperie" (Fig. 59); an artistic invention or theme; not, so to speak, a complete symphonic form; not a great and complete work like the "Æsecus and Hesperie" (Fig. 60). Such, within the limits of the medium, are all the etchings, least and most elaborate, of Rembrandt and Claude; in modern times, of Turner and Whistler. Of them Ruisdael is not one. The names of Rembrandt, Claude, Turner, and Whistler

are powers in the hierarchy of art, because each, in his way, got intellectual and artistic impressions of life and nature as entirety and whole, while each kept the keen lens of his seeing eye on some, few or many, of the details of that whole, recording them with extremest care. Moreover, they walked through their own lives, and in their works they are shown to have so walked, attended by a vision of the totality of meanings, never confused or lost sight of among the infinity of witnesses to those meanings. It is thus that their works, or any works of art similar to theirs,

Fig. 58. Confused Underlying Design of Ruisdael's Etching, Fig. 57.

acquire just title to being called sublime; thus and not otherwise. In a word, they designed, in the sense of imaginatively arranged, their subjects, i.e., they created their pictures. They selected what they saw suited their purpose, and they then ordered what they selected in such fashion as would best emphasize that purpose. At the birth and at the maturity of every work by these men, and none of their works prove it more entirely than their etchings, absolute equivalents of their drawings, there were present emotion, reason, knowledge; hence none of their

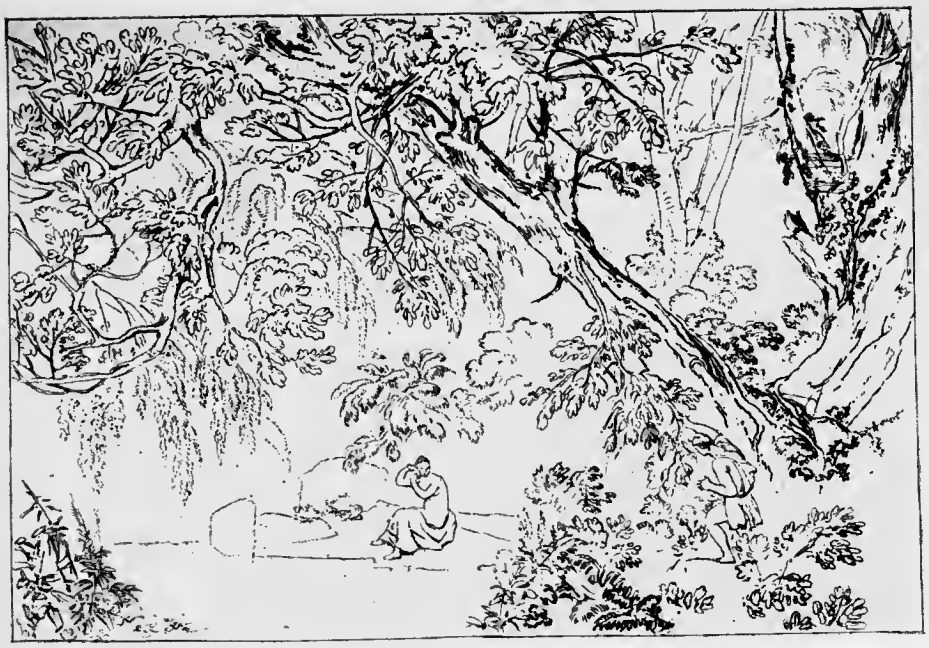


Fig. 59. Æsecus and Hesperie. Etching by Turner.

Fig. 60. Clear Underlying Design of Turner's Etching, Fig. 59.

works can ever grow old in the sense of outworn. That they were masters of their medium goes without saying. That they were magnificent draughtsmen is the beginning and end of the whole matter, for on the magnificence of their drawing rests the justice in their having such reputations as they have, and long have had.

CHAPTER VI.

MEZZOTINT ENGRAVING—CLAUDE LORRAIN AND RICHARD EARLOM

UP to this point we have been trying to get an understanding of the technical processes of engraving; to learn what line engravings, etchings, woodcuts, are; i.e., pictures made from engraved plates, etched plates, wood blocks; things, the very existence of which depends upon line. It is line; line variously combined; coarse line in woodcuts; hair lines in dry-point etching; all sorts of lines, tapering, or of even thickness; delicate or coarse, steady or tremulous; smooth or broken; it is line, and line alone, on which all the prints thus far considered have depended for their being. Dürer's finest line engraving, or the robust prints of his etching period, such as "The Great Cannon" (Fig. 56), or his broad woodcuts, such as the "Repose in Egypt" (Fig. 33); Mantegna's "Triumph of Cæsar" (Fig. 30), of art no less a triumph; that Assumption engraved on the silver pax of St. John's in Florence (Fig. 11); Marcantonio's masterly transcripts of the works of Raphael (Fig. 39); Lucas of Leyden at his best (Fig. 31); Rembrandt, Claude, Van Dyck, and Ruisdael, every one of these men's engravings, etchings, or woodcuts consists of a design made up of lines, a *drawing*, either furrowed into or left in relief upon the surface of a metal plate or block of wood. These lines may define the simplest shape or they may veil that shape with effects of shade and shadow so complex as to make us forget all about line, as such. Yet, when all has been said, a very little careful thought or examination must make it clear to any one that prints such as we have been examining have both origin and end in line; that line implies drawing; drawing, which the great Renaissance master declared to be the father of all arts.

Further, we have tried to emphasize the fact, beyond chance of mis-

understanding, that such prints as have been discussed are, in varying degrees, equivalent to drawings. The value of such prints rests ultimately, as has been said, on the same grounds as those on which the value of drawings rests; value which lies wholly in the fact that into a drawing, done with pen or pencil, the artist puts his very self in his effort to get down the utmost about the facts of his subject as it appears to his and other men's bodily eyes, together with the utmost of his own peculiar and individual reaction, intellectual and emotional, which *is* himself. Granting, then, as prime requisites in the makeup of an artist, clear and penetrating sight, together with impassioned vision or poetic fire, it follows, as the sun his course, that all artistic records of such conditions, drawings, must have unique value. They are the first records that an artist makes, and they may easily contain the most that any record can contain of an artist's zeal for certain facts of nature and the bearing of such facts in his emotional world. In his drawings we may, and in the drawings of great men must, come into the most direct and immediate communion with the mind and soul of the artist, be he Raphael, Rembrandt, or Whistler. Now for such drawings we have shown that engraving, etching, woodcutting, may offer equivalent substitutes, this added, equivalent substitutes in considerable or great numbers. Hence while the intrinsic standard value of the artistic currency is absolutely maintained, the amount of such currency put into, or possible of circulation, is enormously increased. Be it remembered, moreover, that the engraved print by a great artist has a value all its own; value which is forever, in itself, in contradistinction to that valuable and much sought engraved print, a bank note, the value of which is only representative and depends upon a reserve deposit in some vault. To get the former we must, as a rule, have the latter, but the latter is plainly only a means to an end; not an end in itself. Those men with whom the latter is only a means to an end, a good end, are the men who make up decent society, the useful, the upright. In so far now as this group of men uses money to the good end of gathering together works of art, expressions of crystalline thinking adequately set forth, for its own pleasure and delight, it represents, indeed, the storehouse for the materials of culture in civilized communities. This group may, and often does, represent only the swine side, the greedy side, of culture; that culture which would corner the beauty of art, as well as nature, for itself. The palace of such art lovers

is little better than a sty so far as the good of society, which is the good of the world, goes. Circe has worked her worst upon the inhabitants of such palaces. They are turned into swine and they have been their own Circes. But luckily they are mortal and subject to death, as are their hoardings to distribution. On the other hand, there are those men who are constantly on the lookout for chances to enrich the world's collections with examples of new and ancient art, evidences of imaginative thinking adequately expressed; men who spend their money for such things because they themselves enjoy and appreciate them and because they want others to do the same, meaning to make it possible for others to do so through generous lending and ultimate giving. These are the cultivated generous. They form a most valuable class in civilized communities. But, when all is said and done, the yeast which leavens the whole lump, the true salt of salvation in such connections, is the number of the rank and file of us who, through taking thought and because we love man and nature, derive endless delight from art, which is the best witness to civilization; those of us who are willing and glad to work hard for an understanding and appreciation of the things which best express the best men's best conceptions about the world of substance, significance, and spirit, past, present, and to come. Many such conceptions have been made evident in the form of pictures; in the world of the church, from Tintoret's "Universal Mother" to Watts's "Spirit of all Religions"; in the scientific, from Rembrandt's "School of Anatomy" to Tyndall's snow crystal drawings; in the natural, from Rembrandt's landscapes to Whistler's; in the world of man, from Holbein's portrait of Erasmus and his red-chalk drawings at Windsor to Reynolds's "Dr. Johnson"; all of which things are the comment of the mind of man upon the dignity of man and his place in and his intensity of regard for the visible creation; witnesses of natural reverence and human understanding; in a word, sure evidence of faith in enduring values. And into the medium of one of the most important of the arts, engraving, no end of such records have been cast, and, by means of this art, preserved for our edification and constant delight.

The sort of pictures, prints, which we have all this while been discussing have their whole existence in the fact of line. They are made of line and line only. To what line really is, and to its place in art, we must now give some further attention and, afterwards, consider an effort made

by the engravers to do away altogether with line, the invention of mezzotint, with its great advantages and beauties, and its inherent limitations. In nature there is no such thing as a line. The line, fundamental as well as chief means of pictorial representation, is a convention by which we express, in all kinds of pictures, the limits and shapes of the things depicted. It may be pure outline or we may add to this, by the interweaving of lines, many or few, the appearance of shade and shadow by means of which the pure or bare outline takes on a look of natural solidity. When we look at nature, tree against hills, hills against sky, heads against a background of wall or crowded together so as to be seen against one another, we actually see nothing but masses of one color relieved against another color. We are conscious of the fact that the head leaves off and the background begins; that the hills' limits in one direction are the sky's limits in the other. We see that all things have their fixed bounds, but we do not see the bounds set off by anything which we think of ordinarily as a line or an outline. They are fixed by such invisible lines as the bird makes in flying. They are set and hemmed in by such lines as the geometrician thinks of when he defines a line as that which has only length. The black mark which we make upon paper, which the artist sweeps across his canvas, may remain visible in the finished picture or it may have vanished, regardless of the fact that it must be there at first,—this mark, called a line, is an arbitrary convention, i.e., a convenient usage agreed upon by all men with perfect uniformity of understanding; the agreement of endless generations of men; a convenient usage that has come to be unconsciously accepted as the natural, visible condition of nature itself. Yet there is no such thing as the conventional line in nature; not, at least, in the usual and commonly accepted sense. None the less, conventional line is the very foundation of all those pictorial representations of nature which it is the end and aim of art to produce, namely pictures. Art is based on nature in the sense that the terms of artistic representation are the shapes and forms of nature, forms and shapes which we recognize in the picture as being those of nature and by means of which we get an understanding of the artist's purpose; in other words, by which we recognize what he has painted. We know the shapes as we know the meanings of the words which, taken together, make a sentence capable, *in toto*, of conveying the speaker's meaning. The words, taken together, are the conveyancers of a sum of meaning far

LINE DRAWING

WASH DRAWING

COLOR DRAWING

JONQUILS

beyond that which could be got from the same words individually. To reproduce shapes we have recourse to lines. They are the means by which we describe shapes. Thus are we using a convention; i.e., by means of line, which does not exist in the makeup of natural appearances, either generally or in detail, we produce the semblance of natural appearances, both generally and in detail. Our work of art is thus based on nature, and is in a sense true to nature, but it is not natural in the sense that any part, great or small, of nature has been actually reproduced or absolutely duplicated.

Now it is, beyond question, one of the chief purposes of art to approach nature as closely as possible, i.e., make the means and materials of art, as they combine to create the semblance of nature, the picture of a tree or the portrait of a man, do so with the utmost amount of verisimilitude. It is evident that while we may get a remarkable resemblance, a wonderful approach to the truth of reality, in an outline of a tree or face, in an outline of these things, made to look round and solid by shadow and shade, laid on in more or less intricate combinations of line, as Rembrandt and Dürer did, and Leonardo da Vinci better than either of them,—it is evident that we may obtain marvelous results, yet it is undeniable that we should get a closer approach to the truth of reality in the pictured representation, say of tree or face, if we could do away with the convention of line altogether. To put it in a different way, if we could make our pictures merely masses of one color set against masses of another, giving to these masses their true shapes, but not by means of outline, we should come nearer yet to nature. This, of course, is exactly what is done in painting.

Recall the explanation of values (page 93) as being the amount of light and shade in a picture irrespective of the color. Look, for example, at the jonquils in color (Fig. 61), yellow and green, and then at the same jonquils with their color taken away, but with their shapes, shade, and shadow forms retained; the values of the picture of jonquils minus color. Of this later condition, the jonquils in values without color, we have two representations, one, in outline, with shade and shadow made up of lines variously combined, the equivalent of a line engraving; the other, in shade and shadow masses, without line, the equivalent of a water color. The latter is undoubtedly a nearer approach to the condition of nature, in which no lines exist, than the former. How find a method of engraving

in light and shade, using no lines, not even an outline, and so, barring color, approach in engraving as near to natural conditions as the painter of the jonquils has or as ever any painter does? The answer to this question came with the discovery of light and shade engraving; with what is known as mezzotint engraving.

Briefly, before explaining the actual process of mezzotint and considering examples of it, we should say a word more of the use of line in pictorial art and especially in the art of painting, upon which engraving, and line engraving in particular, has mainly hinged, despite the fact that so many splendid works have been produced which have had no direct connection with painting; not more direct, at least, than is implied by the fact that they are the work of men whose lives were primarily given to painting. It is this that must be made plain. Painting, painted pictures, which means the representation of the visual aspect of man and nature, the representation on a flat surface, and in only two dimensions, of things which have three dimensions and are variously placed in space, depends upon three fundamental things. These fundamental things are outline, which gives the shape to pictured objects; light, shade, and shadow, the matter of values as already explained, which give the look of roundness and solidity to pictured objects; color, which gives such objects their loveliest natural attribute and, probably, their most precious artistic quality. With two of these fundamental things only, outline and chiaroscuro, or light and shade, does engraving deal.

That painting is, or probably will be, the most natural which follows nature closest. The closest possible following of nature really implies the concealment of line; in other words, paint in masses, when line is done away with and edges, distinct or softened as the case demands, alone remain; the condition of nature carried over into art. In this way many of the greatest painters have worked, the school of Venice in largest measure, headed by Titian, together with many a northern master, Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, Reynolds, Turner, Corot, Whistler. And yet we cannot maintain with any show of reason in the face of fact, one of the greatest of all the facts of art, the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florentine school from Botticelli to Raphael, that the best painting necessarily implies the concealment of outline, or denies even the use of color put on in line-like touches interwoven as are the lines of shade and shadow in line engraving. This procedure is common even on the best canvases of

Raphael, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, and others of their company. Neither are clearly defined line and outline by any means uncommon in the work of the Venetian painters, John Bellini and Tintoret.

There are two important facts to be considered in this connection. The first, that the use of line and outline, as it is the most fundamental of the attributes which have been enumerated, the prime means by which facts about nature and man can be expressed in pictorial art, so also it is the means first employed and studied by individuals and races when they begin to make pictures. The second fact is this. Some men and groups of men have a stronger natural leaning towards pure form or shape than towards color. Under the former head would come the Florentine school, Raphael in the foremost place, of course; under the latter the Venetian school, Titian as its chief exponent. That one prefers color with all its glory and, for the sake of it, sacrifices something of form, or shape, while the other fairly adores shape or form and, for their sake, sacrifices somewhat of color, is a matter as unexplainable as why one man likes a certain flavor and another does not. But the fact remains that the two greatest schools of painting the western world has known, and all other great schools and individuals, began with line and, later, by unexplainable inclinations retained it or discarded it as far as possible. The bearing of which for our present purpose is that drawing, the rock on which all art rests, is a matter of the various uses of line.

To return now to our starting point. It does not mean that those engravers who sought a way of engraving—mezzotint was the way they discovered—by which line and outline, or any crosshatching of lines in shade and shadow, could be done away with, any more discovered the perfect way of engraving than that the Venetians worked out the perfect way of painting. It means simply this, that for depicting, by the art of engraving, certain aspects of life and nature, a nearer approximation to perfection had been found, as is equally true of the Venetians in their painting, or in the work of Rubens, the preëminent colorist of the North. On the other hand, Marcantonio, the follower of Raphael, and all the engravers, original or of the translator group, who, leaving out color, worked chiefly for form, still, finally, in their consummate works, always set down evident and plainly visible lines; lines in themselves often exquisitely beautiful and, as such, the enhancers of the total beauty of that of which they were the parts. The whole question turns on the fact that

the means of art as well as the achievements of art are all human conventions, hence finite, and that the subject of art is infinite. No means or single convention can do more than tell us something, little at most, of the infinite world. One means or convention is peculiarly fitted for the expression of one part of this subject; another, for another part. The personal equation enters into the means and convention, into the processes and technique of an artist, be he painter, engraver, or etcher, just as much as into the kind and degree of his imaginative vision of ultimate significance or his power of grasping, hence setting forth, appearances and realities of fact and making these, as he sets them forth, recognizable to all men; finally, through their recognizableness, uncovering and conveying meanings and significance hidden from most men. Thus the artist opens the closed eyes of souls upon the realm of fundamental realities and eternal values, the glorious consummation of which is a serene and alert-mindedness which ends in the sort of faith that helps make endurable the seeming confusion of the world of matter.[1] It is a consummation which creates for us a new heaven and a new earth through the agency of other men's art, assisted, of course, by our own artistic comprehension. The works of great artists are inspiration given body; their prescience into the other, yet present, world of fact and meaning, given substance of form and color. It is this substance, this body, which alone can help the mass of us to understand more and to see more, hence enjoy more, than would otherwise be possible. Herein lies the inestimable value of art. Art that tends toward this end and art education that tends to give a better understanding of this end, when, as in the works of the masters, it has been to an unusual degree attained, is the only art worth the name, and no less is such art education the only art education worth the name.[2]

It is often asserted that mezzotint engraving was invented by Prince Rupert, nephew of Charles I, but it is now pretty clearly ascertained that the honor of the invention belongs to a man by the name of Siegen, a lieutenant in the Prince's service. The art was taught to Prince Rupert by this lieutenant and it was introduced into England by the Prince himself, who was no mean practitioner of it. Siegen had a Dutch mother and a German father, and while the date of his birth, like the date of his

[1] Gœthe said: "The end is everywhere; in art is truth—seek solace there."

[2] Ralph Adams Cram has recently said, "All great art is a light to lighten the darkness of mere activity." George Eliot long since said, "Art is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow-men beyond the bounds of our personal lot."

invention, is uncertain, a portrait of Amelia Elisabeth, Princess of Hesse, executed by him in 1643, gives all the information which is essential, for it is known that Siegen was in the Prince's service as early as 1611.

The usual metal employed by the mezzotint engravers was copper, although steel was likewise used. The process consists in passing an instrument called a rocker or cradle over the surface of the plate. This instrument resembles a broad chisel, the edge of which is curved, segmental, having the outline of the rocker of an infant's cradle, hence its name. Its surface is studded with many sharp, fine and pointed teeth. The cradle is rocked from side to side by the motion of the hand so that each point or tooth makes a small depression in the metal plate, thus raising a corresponding burr. This burr, slight roughing of the surface of the plate, will naturally retain some ink, in spite of the most careful wiping before the plate goes into the press, and this ink will give the print a certain amount of cloudy shading, often, if properly managed, an element of great beauty in a print, and one always lost in late impressions, because the burr, so slight, is soon worn away by the heavy process of printing. The burr in mezzotint is essentially the same as the burr already discussed in connection with dry-point etching. In practice the burr of a mezzotint plate means the sum of many little elevations beside as many little depressions; in dry-point etching the burr means the sum of the little elevated lines beside as many depressed lines. The process of rocking is carried on until the entire surface of the metal plate is evenly roughened with burr and evenly sown with dots. It is not uncommon to have a plate rocked in eighty or a hundred different directions in order to get a sufficiently roughened surface. It is obvious that a plate so rocked, when inked, will hold not only hundreds of little drops of ink in the depressions, but also some ink on its surface, because of the burr. When put through the press such a plate will naturally print dead black and, through the agency of the burr, a very beautiful velvety surface such as can be obtained in no other way. This surface on a fine mezzotint print resembles nothing more closely than the bloom on a grape or the kidlike surface of a calla lily flower. Intrinsically it is one of the richest as well as most thoroughly beautiful surfaces which any art can command.

It is clear to be seen that by the use of a scraper, a blunt-ended bar of hard steel, the burr can be more or less removed at will; that, if so desired, it can be removed altogether; in a word, that the dents and eleva-

tions made by the teeth of the cradle can be pressed, or rubbed down, until they become very shallow, or cease to exist at all. Now, as in metal engraving the deeper the incision the more ink it will hold and the heavier line it will print, so also the same is true of the incised dot or dent on a mezzotint plate. It becomes apparent that any sort of a design or picture can be worked out of a fully rocked plate by means of the scraper; the deepest shadows being left untouched, and the high lights obtained by scraping away all the burr and pressing in all the dents until that part of the metal plate is once more perfectly smooth or burnished and, accordingly, incapable of holding ink. It is obvious that every conceivable intermediate shade can be provided for by more or less scraping. The scraper may, in a manner, be likened to a paint brush, the instrument which in an artist's hand produces every exquisite and imperceptible gradation of hue or chiaroscuro, though we must not forget that the scraper, like the burin, is a much more difficult tool to manipulate than the brush or the pencil.

The print taken from a mezzotint plate is an engraving in light and shade, a thing frequently devoid of any lines whatsoever; a thing which may easily be mistaken for a wash drawing. Made by an artist, who is likewise a master of mezzotint, such a print may be as fine as any wash drawing, every gradation from pure white to deep black being as certainly though not as easily obtained with the scraper as with the brush. It is an art which can be practiced without great expenditure of preparatory labor or wearisome practice because, after the metal plates have been rocked, a thing which can be done by any skilled workman, an artist may take them anywhere and use them at will with almost as great ease as an etcher his grounded plate.

As an example of what may be done with almost pure mezzotint, i.e., mezzotint not reinforced by etched lines as are the mezzotint engravings of the "Liber Studiorum," Turner's "Brougham Castle" (Fig. 62), 1825, is as good as can be found in the whole history of landscape subjects rendered in this lovely, delicate, yet vigorous medium. Amiel said that all great art implies a state of mind. No better illustration of the truth of this statement could be found than Turner's "Brougham." The brilliant mass of the castle dimmed on the side toward the clearing sky and the rainbow, but bright where the direct light of the cleared sky falls upon it, becomes an almost supernatural castle as it stands forth from the

Fig. 62. Brougham Castle. Mezzotint after Turner.

depth and hollow of the storm cloud beyond. The unearthly quiet of the lull before the life of things has quite resumed its natural sway; the brightness of the rainbow graded in truthful bands which recall its color; this greatest miracle of heaven reflected in the black mirror of the mill pond below; smoking chimneys in the distance; sheep coming forth to browse upon the middle slopes; even the lilies, dazzling white among their own dark pads and the ooze at the water's margin, are, all alike, shown in an atmosphere of common reality yet subject to that innate spirit of a moment of time which always verges upon the supernatural and the fearful; in a word, almost spectral. The simple fact is that Turner not only heard the sermons in stones and read the books in running brooks, but by depicting these and all the other things which go with them to make up "great nature" in the way he did, himself preached endless unique sermons and engraved endless very wonderful books indeed. The reality put him into a certain state of mind. Then

he pictured his state of mind by transcribing what best served his purpose from the reality. In other words, he *drew* the unseen as well as the seen. And for such a reality as the subject in question, together with the state of mind produced by it, the fearsome and gentle together with the element of promise, he almost gives us clairvoyance. Turner for such a purpose found pure mezzotint a perfect technical medium. Never did any artist preach more eloquently upon the theme of the nearness of grandeur unto dust, or speak more convincingly of the things which pass in swift endless change and those which remain for long seasons unaltering, than Turner in his "Brougham Castle." It is, like every great picture ever made, a case of projecting the realm of thought into the realm of matter; a declaration, in fascinating embodiment, of the fact that things are what we think them; of the immortal doctrine that "the mind is its own place" and can "make a heaven of hell and hell of heaven"; a very wonderful work of engraving which is an equally wonderful work of drawing.

Mezzotint was an art which lent itself with particular grace to the reproduction of painting because of its soft and harmonious character; particularly to the reproduction of paintings which depend largely upon chiaroscuro for their effect and charm. For this reason it was taken up by the translator-engravers as well as the painter-engravers. More than a hundred mezzotint engravers found employment in reproducing the portraits of Sir Joshua Reynolds alone. The best of these men's works are now esteemed classics of this art which reached its highest development in the eighteenth-century portraiture of England and in early nineteenth-century English landscape, notably that of Turner, an example of which has just been discussed. Yet splendid as these works of art are, and highly as they are prized, very few men practice mezzotint engraving at the present time or have during the past half century.[1]

It was customary to use mezzotint in connection with etching, as now, knowing the process of each art, can readily be understood. An artist would, for example, etch the main lines of his design, the contours of figures and the bounding lines of draperies, or the outlines of hills and of the branches of trees. Afterwards he would rock the plate and finally

[1]There have been a few men who have practiced the art of mezzotint in notable manner of recent times, and among these the name of Frank Short stands out conspicuously. Besides reproducing works of other painters, he has engraved some of the hitherto unengraved works of Turner in a masterly fashion, not to mention landscape compositions of his own.

scrape it, until, on the finished plate, the deeply etched lines would appear as if partially hidden behind or under a thin layer, veil as it were, of mezzotint dots because the lines of the etching are, as a rule, much deeper than the dots of the rocker. The print from such a plate would contain corresponding effects of outline with light and shade, a combination akin to that of a pen and wash drawing; one, as all know, admirably adapted to landscape subjects. Hence the reason that etching and mezzotint engraving, which together give line, and light and shade, form and chiaroscuro, were adopted for the reproduction of landscape studies in Claude's famous book, "The Liber Veritatis," and for Turner's yet more famous book, "The Liber Studiorum," which two books respectively may, with truth, be called the two great classics of the art of landscape.

There are, however, many instances in which painter-gravers and translator-engravers worked with pure mezzotint,—Turner's "Brougham Castle" is an example,—allowing no etched line to appear in the final result; yet these very men would not infrequently make use of etched guide lines during the process of engraving the plate. It is important to notice that Valentine Green, the greatest perhaps of all mezzotint engravers, followed now one and again the other method with perfect freedom of choice, believing, evidently, that for some subjects the distinct and heavily etched line was desirable, while for others pure mezzotint was preferable. In his landscape engravings from Claude's "Liber Veritatis," Richard Earlom combined etching with mezzotint, but in the majority of his engraved portraits, as in the charming portrait of a boy after Rubens (Fig. 63), he confined himself to pure, or nearly pure, mezzotint. Such mezzotint portraits as Earlom's and Green's prove these engravers to have been as able with cradle and scraper as Sir Joshua and Rubens were with the brush,—a fact which proves their claim to be called great artists, as like fact establishes like claim in the case of Marcantonio; i.e., the power of perceiving the distinctive attributes of Raphael, Rubens, or Sir Joshua, and the ability to translate the originals into a different medium, while making the translations, if not perfect counterparts always of the originals themselves, fresh originals. An analogy will help to make the meaning clearer. At the end of the fifth canto of Dante's "Hell," Francesca is made to say: "There is no greater woe than in misery to remember the happy time." Six centuries later Tennyson wrote:

"That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."

Call this a translation if you like, and many do, but recognize in it an original work of art; splendidly truthful thought, expressed by Dante and Tennyson in widely differing media, in different languages, different

Fig. 63. Mezzotint by Richard Earlom.

verse, but in forms of equally imperishable beauty; just what we find in Marcantonio's engraving of Raphael's "Poetry" (Fig. 39); in Valentine Green's and Richard Earlom's finest mezzotints after the portraits of Rubens and Sir Joshua Reynolds.

CHAPTER VII.

TURNER, "THE LIBER STUDIORUM," AND WORDSWORTH

IT is with regret that we must pass by, without more than mentioning their names, the wonderful portrait engravers of France in the seventeenth and first part of the eighteenth centuries, Nanteuil and Edelinck before others. These men, great as they are, stand below Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and probably below the best of the English mezzotint engravers. Further, they employed no new methods. For this reason they have been left out, because this book is meant to be introductory to the general subject, in the sense that it introduces the reader to the salient principles of the art of engraving in its most essential forms, together with that art's relation to drawing, as illustrated by a few of the works of the very greatest artists who were themselves engravers. With this French group must be named the important etcher, Jacques Callot, author of base as well as wonderful things of an absolutely unique sort. His beggars, as distinct from Rembrandt's as day from night, are none the less marvels of artistic reality; works of the highest distinction considered as drawings. So, too, his prints of the gypsies with whom he spent much time. He has been rightly called the "Dante of engravers," but it is not true, as many assume, that his subjects are all taken from the distorted visions of suffering humanity, in spite of the fact that he did depict the very essence of horror and much that is loathsomely repulsive. If he drew and etched hell he also recorded heaven, saints, and apostles with lovely and exquisite touch as well as profound sympathy. We must also pass by Hollar, a seventeenth-century etcher, born in Prague, who did much of his work in England, and who is to this day unique for the way in which he managed to represent textures, the individual qualities of fur, silk, velvet, lace, or feathers.

A famous eighteenth-century group of English engravers, not geniuses and not painter-gravers, but, nevertheless, remarkable artists in their

way and men whose works yet command good markets and high respect, is headed by Sir Robert Strange, William Sharp, and William Woollett. Volpato, Raphael Morghen, referred to at the outset, and Piranesi make up a somewhat similar group for Italy in the same age. But more important far as an artist, a painter-graver of wonderful though often subverted powers, was the English poet, William Blake. Line engraving, which had fallen on evil days, was, in great measure, restored to its true dignity by this strange eighteenth-century genius, seer, and inventor, in whose works the heights of beauty and the depths of madness are equally touched. His "Book of Job" illustrations are among the most notable works of modern line engraving. As drawing (Fig. 2) they are on a par with the work of Botticelli (Fig. 16), though representative of a genius as unlike his as day is unlike night.

Wood engraving, likewise fallen on evil days, or, to speak more accurately, almost forgotten, was lifted once more to its rightful place by one of the most interesting of men and an artist, at times, truly great, Thomas Bewick. He not only revived but he revolutionized wood engraving, the very process of it. Bewick made use of the white line already referred to in connection with fifteenth-century *criblé*[1] (Fig. 19). He gave the "white line" its vogue in modern wood engraving and himself produced an enormous number of extremely fine prints which are masterly drawings, every one of them. Among these are the illustrations to "British Birds and Quadrupeds." The point of the "white line" is this: On an engraved wood block the surface carries the ink and does the printing. The lines or spaces cut in, carry no ink, hence print white, in the sense of not printing at all; i.e., leave white paper. The procedure of the wood engraver when he is using the "white line" is the same as that of the metal engraver. He incises his design. The procedure of printing a wood block, so engraved or cut, is the same as that usual in printing a wood block, namely, from the surface. This, the surface, prints black because it carries the ink, while the incised lines print white; in other words, do not print at all. The result is a design printed, as if drawn, in white lines on black paper.

Of the great moderns, Whistler, as many believe, in the class with Rembrandt, and Sir Seymour Haden, Charles Méryon, Samuel Palmer, in the high places of the near-great,—Millet might be placed with Whistler

[1]See pages 75, 76.

but for the meagre sum of his accomplishment, under twenty plates,—of these men no attempt will be made to say anything. It is a matter of regret to pass them by, yet they do not occupy a fundamental place in an introduction of the sort planned. Of the author's humility no more complete proof can be made than his urging the reader of these pages to undertake at once the six lectures which Ruskin delivered on "Engraving, Wood and Metal," before the University of Oxford in 1872. They are as brilliant as jewels and as clear as mountain spring water. They sparkle with wit; wit which is at once wisdom and humor, and they are as earnest as human sincerity can make the opinions of men. They have style, in that they are veritably of the man himself, a very wonderful man; no other like him in his day save Carlyle; few like him in any day. Whoever reads "Ariadne Florentina" understandingly will learn a vast deal about the arts of engraving and drawing in particular, as well as about art in general. Its value far outweighs many a learned compilation of bare facts about art, no matter how accurate or how newly discovered. What "Ariadne Florentina" does is to beget real enthusiasm for the arts of engraving and drawing in particular, and for art in general; a highly desirable thing which, under the German influence of recent years, has come to be regarded as uncritical and, worse still, unlearned. It is not new attributions, or more knowledge as to ancient methods, or fresh discovery about the history of art, important as these are, that the present age needs. What it cries for, often unknowingly, is the sort of teachers who shall beget in it a passion for beauty through showing it, "with cause," what and where beauty may be found both in nature and in art, which is, as the great poet said, the "child of nature"; men who believe that the joys of art like the joys of nature are the rightful inheritance of us all; men who shall do much to bring such beliefs to fruit; such men, preeminently, as John Ruskin and Charles Eliot Norton.

The subject of the present chapter is nineteenth-century English landscape as represented in etching, engraving, and mezzotint, hence drawing, and as practiced by, in many respects, the greatest landscape painter who has yet looked with delighted eyes, understanding mind, and loving heart on earth and sky and sea, Joseph Mallord William Turner,[1] who was born in 1775 and died in 1851. In 1777 there appeared what is known as

[1] A. J. Finberg, than whom nobody in recent years, and one or two only in years past, has so profoundly understood Turner, speaks of "his incomparable technical skill, his boundless energy, and the infinite variety of his mind."

Claude's "Liber Veritatis." It was to all intents and purposes the publication of Claude Lorrain's composition book, not, in the usual sense, a sketch-book. Be it remembered that Claude in his own day was greatly the fashion and that, after his death, his vogue increased. In order to protect himself against copyists he was in the habit of making slight records of his finished pictures before he parted with them. These records were made in line and wash and their chief purpose was to establish identification. In a word, they were drawings; shorthand transcripts of his finished pictures; objects which recorded faithfully the composition of his pictures both in regard to shapes, placement of shapes, and chiaroscuro, done in line and monochrome. Bound together they make up what is known as the "Liber Veritatis," book of truth to nature, as it came to be regarded. It was clearly a collection made and kept for the artist's personal use; primarily for the verification of his own much-sought paintings, which were often counterfeited. There is no reason for supposing that Claude ever thought of these volumes as having intrinsic or special artistic value. But everything of Claude's in the hundred years subsequent to his death took on especial value; much of it justly. In 1777 these compositions were published in book form, translated into etching and mezzotint. There were two hundred in all. Ultimately they found their way into the Duke of Devonshire's collection. Richard Earlom got them ready for publication, himself doing a large share of the actual work of etching and mezzotinting. As examples of this branch of engraving they represent one of the undoubtedly greatest men who has devoted his life to landscape art.

The English painter, Turner, was born only two years before Claude's book was published. In landscape Claude represents the classical; the beauties of nature set into compositions of artificially exquisite balance and rhythm. He thought of landscape, the face of nature as embellished by art before it could become the proper subject for pictures. Elegance is the watchword of Claude's school, as it was of Claude himself. Gracefulness, with undeniable artificiality, cast into the forms and aspects of nature, especially Italian nature, was Claude's forte. Genius he was beyond all doubt, but his interests were narrowly centered and he had no very broad variety of likings. Rough nature, one is tempted to say natural nature, Claude cared little for. His very soul was classic. He sought to express the spirit of classicism in terms of nature not in-

frequently used as the setting for the actual remains of classical Roman art. Views of the actual Roman Campagna alternate with imaginary compositions, "ideal compositions" they would have been called in Claude's day, throughout his work. His art was very popular in England and had been the absolute standard of excellence and exclusive taste for the better part of a century, when the "Liber Veritatis" appeared. This, of course, spread knowledge of him broadcast; before this it had been confined to the few and wealthy who could afford his pictures. Now he became not only an absolute but a universal standard of excellence and a prime requisite for people of taste. In other words, by 1800 his reputation was enormous and nothing that varied with the subjects which he painted, or the style in which he painted them, would pass muster with the critics and the connoisseurs. We should remember that Claude was all that his admirers thought him to be, but we ought also to remember that his interest in nature was not catholic or, perhaps, even broad. The man's own very greatness had the effect of narrowing other men's breadth of likings and sources of enjoyment in the natural world. This is not, of course, uncommon. "Apollo and the Muses on Parnassus" (Fig. 17) is a very characteristic example of Claude's manner of composing; a drawing full of exquisite accuracies to the physical facts of the subject, but, further, imbued with such surpassing grace and harmonious rhythm as constitute it a work *sui generis*. Beyond question does it recall Raphael's well-known "Parnassus" in the Vatican, yet in no sense is it a copy.

The classical Claude is analogous to the seventeenth-century poet, Bolton, in such verses as—

> "The summer sun hath gilded fair
> With morning rays the mountains;
> The birds do carol in the air,
> And naked nymphs in fountains;
> . . . . . .
> All breathe delight, all solace in the season:
> Not now to sing, were enemy to reason."

Compare this with the "Yew Trees" of Wordsworth, the very essence of thoughtful and romantic art:

> "Those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
> Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;

Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of redbrown hue,
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
May meet at noon-tide; Fear and trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton
And Time the Shadow;—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves."

It is rare when a prophet in art, or a withdrawer from the customary course of procedure, is received with any degree of public favor; much more rare if he receives the favor of the critics. So it was when, in the opening years of the nineteenth century, Turner began to show his pictures; works of art that were at once prophecy and the denial of existing canon. And so it happened that this new painter received a full meed of dispraise and was stoned like many another Stephen of painting and of poetry, by critic, connoisseur, and dilettante, through the press and in private. But that Turner did not receive tremendous recognition in high and discriminating praise, and in large money returns for his work, before, as Ruskin says, "it was too late for him to care," is not true. The fact is that Turner, the man, was an "odd stick" and simply did not choose to recognize the praise which was showered on him for years before his death. Further, this same Turner was a man possessed of a very demon of work, to exorcise which he shunned the usual paths of social intercourse, devoting all his time to his profession; to work in which he found his own reward and for which he got the reward of an honestly earned fortune, and upon which now rests the practically undisputed reputation of being the greatest of landscape painters.

Turner, "The Liber Studiorum," and Wordsworth

Turner looked at nature much as Wordsworth did. Theirs was the romantic point of view. To see nature as it is and, in art, to represent it as it is, not as it appears to the reflecting lens of the camera but as it appears to the reflecting mind of man,—this was what these two men did, each a transcendently great artist; each laughed at when he first appeared; each now securely niched in the only real temple of fame, the gratefully and truly appreciative minds of many men whose numbers augment as the years pass. Each was a true poet because he looked on the ordinary and the commonplace scenes and, in them, saw extraordinary and unusual sights and, to the rank and file of men, unsuspected meanings. And all this they couched in recognizable shapes and colors, or ordinary and usual words, Turner and Wordsworth producing pictures and poems that are to the realities of this world as visions of another world; of beauty, grandeur, awfulness, such as really exist, but which are no more to be recognized by the commonplace eye than they are to be understood by the mediocre mind. Into the natural light of the sun they infused the light of sympathetic understanding and, to them, in this combined light the world stood forth and was revealed. To shed light upon a subject is as common an expression as is the act of letting light in at a window, but it is a far less common thing to see done and it is a far more difficult thing to do. Turner and Wordsworth accepted every visual aspect of nature, from the calm of a summer's day to the gale on a winter's sea; saw, and in their art represented it as it appeared in the light of common day; saw, and in their art represented it as it appeared to their own illumined understandings. They did what Emerson means when he says: "I think, if I were professor of Rhetoric,—teacher of the art of writing well to young men,—I should use Dante for my text-book. Come hither, youth, and learn how the brook that flows at the bottom of your garden, or the farmer who ploughs the adjacent field . . . are the very best basis of poetry, and the material which you must work up. . . . Yet is not Dante reason or illumination and that essence we were looking for, but only a new exhibition of the possibilities of genius?" The same idea as to the proper substance for art, the proper study of the true artist, is expressed by Kingsley in "Alton Locke" when he puts these words into the mouth of Sandy Mackaye as they look down the city alley: "Say how ye saw the mouth o' hell, and the twa pillars thereof at the entry, the pawnbroker's shop on the one side and the gin palace on the other—two monstrous

devils eating up men, women and bairns, body and soul. Look at the jaws of the monsters how they open and open to swallow in anither and anither. Write about that." The fact is that no great artist ever feels the need of going far afield for subject-matter. At least if he cannot find subject-matter in the countryside at home and the men and women about him it is certain he will not abroad. Preëminently true of Dante and Chaucer, this is equally true of Dürer, Rembrandt, Turner, and Wordsworth. Of the last two, one wrote and the other painted as if indeed "another sun had been added to the heavens at mid-noon." It is not difficult to understand how such a pair of true universalists, artists really catholic in their breadth of interest in natural scenery as affected by natural phenomena,—how such artists flashed as a great discord on eyes used to Claude's mellow elegance, with all its beauty and all its artificiality; how such men agonized the ears and artistic sensibilities of minds and understandings attuned to the elegant Pope, and the still more elegant Gray.

To the Claude-trained artist and the Claude-trained critic who, as is natural with all the truly orthodox, hated to change, or even hear change mentioned, and who believed that "whatever is, is right," and for whom any long-accepted opinion, doctrine or practice, had the authority of a creed in proportion as it had been held a shorter or a longer time and by less or more men,—to such artists and to such critics, and to the public for whom such artists painted and to whom such critics dictated, Turner's advent seemed a menace. He was a breaker with tradition. He was an overturner of accepted truths. He was as Luther, or Channing, or Lincoln. First of all, not being understood he was accused of every sort of artistic vice, heresy, and, at last, insanity. This is the usual method of attacks aimed at radicals in any field of human effort; the mother church used it on Luther; the orthodox believers of New England used it on Channing; the English church used it on James Martineau; a great party used it on Lincoln; no one of whom ever had perfection claimed for him, much less claimed it for himself, but each one of whom did something, much, to weaken the shackles of hidebound thinking and increase the areas of human sympathy and understanding, in the end making men freer intellectually and spiritually. And this is just what Turner did, and Wordsworth. We do not say that either was perfect in his art, any more than we would maintain that Luther, Channing, Martineau, or Lincoln was always and absolutely right. What we do say, and now, of

course, in Turner's case as in Wordsworth's, just as in the cases of the other men named,—what we do say is this: Turner and Wordsworth in their respective ways did an enormous amount to open wider men's eyes to the meanings of nature, its grandeur, beauty, awfulness, and gentle loveliness; did a vast deal towards increasing freedom of thought, and feeling, and deepening emotion in the presence of the wonderful world of nature, which, the more it is understood the more of true reverence accrues to the human race, that saving grace which it is the twin duty and glory of art and science to bestow; pure art and pure science given visible body, so to speak, in the Tyndalls and the Huxleys, the Wordsworths and the Turners.

And now to some of the things which Turner did, for the doing of which he found engraving, etching, and mezzotint engraving in particular, a satisfactory medium; especially to Turner's great landscape book, the "Liber Studiorum," which was intended, as the prospectus said, "to attempt a classification of the various styles of landscape, viz., the historic, mountainous, pastoral, marine, and architectural"; a book of examples, intended to rival and to surpass Claude's "Liber Veritatis," as it did, and for that matter as it does all works of landscape which the world has seen. Such is the consensus of opinion. It is expressed adequately by Norton: "The collection of engravings from designs by Turner known as the 'Liber Studiorum,' or book of studies, is probably the work on which, hereafter, the fame of the greatest of landscape painters will mainly rest, and from which the student will mainly gather the fullest and most exact conception of the nature of his unparalleled genius."

Taking the plates of the "Liber" as a whole,—seventy-one finished, twenty partly so, and the balance, nine, of the projected hundred that was to make up the full set,—looked upon as a whole, Turner's "Liber" is the most insistent and best illustrated protest ever made against all forms of denial of the doctrine that art is "based on nature and must in a sense be true to her." The "Liber Studiorum" is a work of scientific accuracy in the way that it sets forth the facts of actual landscape in their natural order and combinations, and in their most literal aspects. It is among the most powerful of preachments on the artistic necessity of truth, in the most matter-of-fact sense, to the everyday and commonplace aspect of the world of clouds and water, calm or rough; of earth, fertile or barren, in moistest lowland meadow or among the frozen peaks of the

highest mountains. The unswerving text of the "Liber" is this: "the world thus and so and not otherwise." In the drawing of mountain scenery, Turner's "Mer de Glace" (Fig. 4), for example, the physical, the geologic formation of the precipices and the ice, with the light and shade of their own making and their own reflecting upon them, and that endless distance on and up, in which the mountains kiss high heaven, fact is set forth with no less precision than it is in many a page of Tyndall. Hear Tyndall's words,—they are from that wonderful book which proves fact to be stranger than fiction,[1]—while you are looking at Turner's lines: "'The sun shone gloriously upon the mountains. . . . Traces of snow clung to the mountains, exposing here and there high vertical sections, which cast dense shadows upon the adjacent plateaux. The glacier was thrown into heaps and 'hummocks,' their tops glistening with white silvery light and their sides intensely shaded." A little later he speaks of "vast ice cascades, resembling the foam of ten Niagaras placed end on end and stiffened into rest." In the same spirit of scientific accuracy to fact, the peer of Turner and the like-minded of Tyndall, Wordsworth, speaks of a cascade "frozen by distance." Truth is what they are all three after and will have at any cost, knowing—which is the quintessential soul of art and of science—knowing for certain that no price paid for truth can be too great, or ever has been, because the thing purchased has everlasting value. It matters little if these three men found each a different medium for his expression of faith in his mistress, nature, Leonardo's "mistress of all high intelligences," and a different purpose for his expressions. It is truth, scientific as well as artistic, which we have in Turner's picture, Wordsworth's poetry, Tyndall's prose. Their aim is identical. It is lovely Catholic St. Francis's praise in his "Canticle to the Sun": "Praised be my Lord for our mother, the earth; for our sister, water; for our brother, the wind." It is Protestant Milton's "to justify the ways of God to man." It is the way of Wordsworth looking at an Alpine pass and one by one, word for word, as Turner line for line, setting down the "black drizzling crags," the "giddy prospect," "the narrow rent," "the immeasurable height," "the unfettered clouds and region of the Heavens." It is Tyndall's way. His very words are: "Over the peaks and through the valleys the sunbeams poured, unimpeded save by the mountains themselves, which sent their shadows in bars of darkness

[1] "Excursions in the Alps."

through the illuminated air. . . . I opened my note book to make a few observations, but soon relinquished the attempt. There was something incongruous, if not profane, in allowing the scientific faculty to interfere where silent worship seemed the 'reasonable service.'" It is the way of all consummate art and all consummate science; to fear no overturn of custom, or doctrine, or belief, no matter how hallowed by time or endeared by sentiment; to fear nothing save what is not true; to beget nothing save perfect faith; to end nowhere but in reverence, open-eyed, broad-minded, high-souled reverence; it may be scientific, or it may be artistic, or it may be religious; the name-tag is of little consequence provided the essential thing, the metal of reverence, rings true. And so the metal of Turner's does ring.

But while the "Liber Studiorum" is, from end to end, one grand protest against anything in art which is not the statement of visual and actual fact, a work of single-hearted, clear-headed, and accurately comprehended purpose to depict by vigorous and delicate drawing the facts of nature, it no less sings the mightiest pæan yet sung to pure idealism, in behalf of that which is higher than fact, namely, meaning; the bearing, the significance, of all the tangible facts of nature in the intangible but most real sphere of intellect and spirit. It is as if art and science on their material sides were creatures speaking different languages, but on their spiritual sides a common language. In application by the ordinary man, be he painter, etcher, sculptor, geologist, naturalist, anatomist, they appear, indeed are, far apart, even antagonistic. Both alike to the ordinary theologist look worldly, and, if desirable, of no really great importance. These men, the useful but not reasoningly broad-minded, speak their own language, a respectable but meagre language not comprehended by their fellows, and, accordingly, by their fellows little heeded and heavily discounted. They have no vision of the totality of significances as they walk through life unattended by vision, their eyes, as they fancy, on the facts. They look with their eyes, not through them, as Blake said; with their eyes but not their minds, hearts, spirits, souls. Not so a Turner, a Rembrandt, a Tyndall, a Huxley, a Newton, a Martineau, a Lincoln. These speak, with varying fluency, a common language;—these and all of their ilk, together with all of the great of all the ages.

The "Liber Studiorum" is a book of landscape studies in which the real, as a basis and the sole basis for the ideal, is declared to be Turner's

doctrine and faith; faith and doctrine declared in his works; works by which all caring to do so may know him. For it he first made a set of wash drawings in sepia over ink lines. From these he himself, in many instances, etched upon the copper the main lines of the composition. If they were etched by other men, from his drawings, he stood always near by to assist and correct. From the etched plates a few proofs were taken.

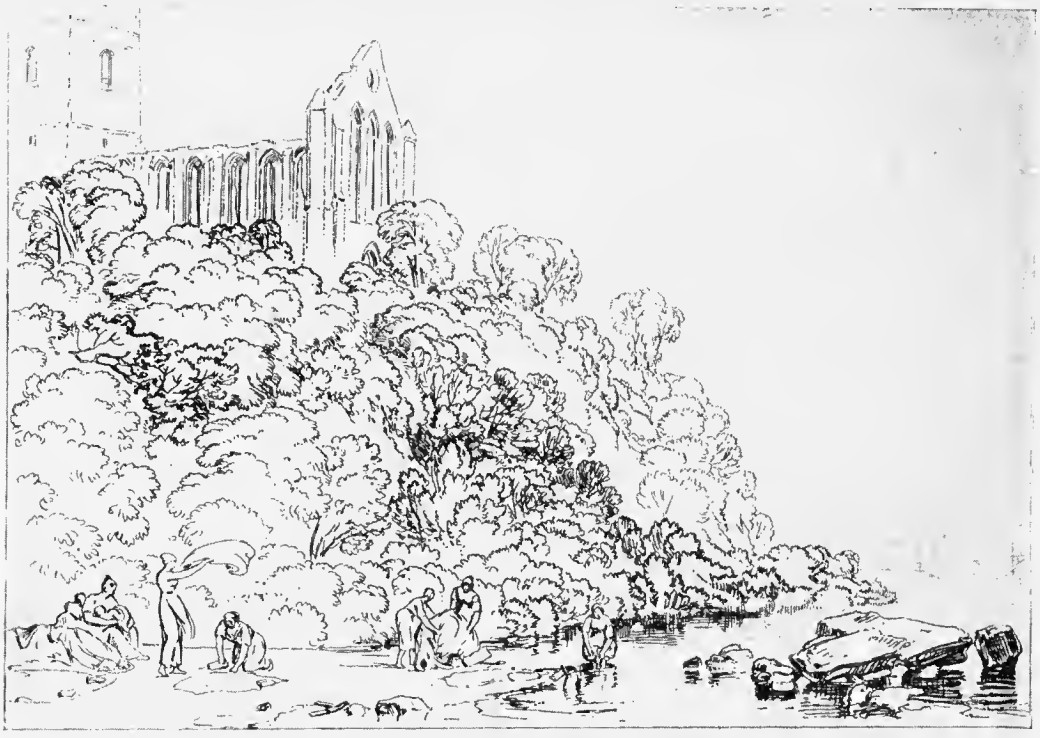


Fig. 64. Dumblain Abbey. Etching by Turner.

Of these "Dumblain Abbey" (Fig. 64) is a fine example; a thing in itself only a means to an end, but, as such, intrinsically precious and rare.

Then, to the etched plate, the body and substance, the light and shade of mezzotint engraving, was added a thing analogous to the sepia wash over the pen lines in the drawing. This work was done largely by other hands than Turner's, though he often took a part himself and was always guarding the work of mezzotinting with his presence and oversight, in the shape of verbal suggestion, manual assistance, and most careful

wash drawings as copies. "Dumblain Abbey" (Fig. 65) in its completed state, with the mezzotint chiaroscuro added to the etching beneath, is a characteristic instance. It is the equivalent of a drawing; in fact, *is* a drawing.

It has often been said that Turner was catholic in his range of interests and of understanding in respect to nature. Other great landscape painters have been masters of certain aspects of nature, certain natural phenomena. Turner was master of all. Claude, so to speak, was master

Fig. 65. Dumblain Abbey. Mezzotint. Turner.

of calm beauty, viz., Parnassus and the Muses (Fig. 17); Rembrandt, of the beauty of rough and homely vigor, viz., the "Square Tower" (Fig. 53); Gainsborough, of undetailed masses of foliage and trees, seen at a distance, and of clouds, all beautiful; Constable, of a damp luxuriance and of deep shadows; Corot, of the beauty of budding and early blooming; Degas, of clear air; and other famous artists, after their kind, each remarkable for some, or perhaps several sorts of natural beauty made permanent, and

glossed, in the terms of art. But Turner was master of all these and many more; of all that Shelley says in his "Mont Blanc":

> " The fields, the lakes, the forests and the streams,
> Ocean, and all the living things that dwell
> Within the dædal earth; lightning, and rain,
> Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurricane;"

Of all, Turner saw the beauty and grandeur and to them gave preëminence in art, especially in his "Liber Studiorum." He understood all these things literally, and he made use of them imaginatively, by way of setting forth his own thoughts and musings about grandeur and beauty, decay and growth, life and death, in the ebb and flow of nature and the existence of man as affected by nature, and not less of nature as it is affected by the existence of man.

Turner's plate of the "Mer de Glace" (Fig. 4) does, in a different medium, what the closing lines of Shelley's "Mont Blanc" do, i.e., gives

> " The secret strength of things
> Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome
> Of heaven is as law, inhabits thee!
> And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,
> If to the human mind's imaginings
> Silence and solitude were vacancy?"

Out of silence and solitude, and out of the hurricane as well, the man Turner gathered meanings. He breathed into his work "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." He draws the prose of nature, her visible shapes; he draws not less the poetry of nature, her meanings, and her he makes her own expositor. She gives to him, as to all men, what he is able to take and make his own; what, namely, he could see and understand. And he could see and understand a vast deal that most men never see or understand, and thus, in his works, is he above most men; a true guide, philosopher, and friend in respect to all that concerns nature.

Look at his "Simplon Pass" (Fig. 66). In a small space, and with lines only, Turner has gotten the spirit of the great ravine; of that part of the face of nature which, in very truth, did speak to him "rememberable things." It is just what Wordsworth got, and, in art, made immortal in "The Prelude." At one moment Turner is the embodiment of grace;

Fig. 66. Simplon Pass. Turner.

the grace of reality, seen nowhere more clearly, and nowhere more wonderfully depicted, than in the unmatched "Liber" plate, "Blair Athol" (Fig. 67), Scotland. At another moment he is the embodiment of rough strength—witness the towering crags and the sharp ice waves of the "Mer de Glace" (Fig. 4). Judged solely by reason and logic it might be argued that there possibly is an overgraceful, at least unnaturally graceful, character in the "Blair Athol"; even an ugly quality, at least more than homely, in the "Mer de Glace." But in matters of art we should always deny the right of reason and logic to be sole judges; to be most helpful associate judges, yes; to be final, no; thrice no, in these matters which pertain so fundamentally to the human heart and human imagination. In

such connections, in the last reaction, go rather with De Quincey and say, of all powers put least trust in the human understanding. For all great art is born of genius, and is stamped with the spirit of genius, Carlyle's "inspired gift of God," which, continuing, he says "is the clearer presence of God most High in a man. Dim, potential in all men, in this man it has become clear, actual"; in this man Turner whose drawings done with the etching needle and the rocker we are examining.

Fig. 67. Blair Athol. Mezzotint. Turner.

Like all the truly great he neither feared the commonplace nor, for the sake of astonishing any one, ever sought the unusual. As the former could not bore him the latter did not stun him. In this respect he is the counterpart of Wordsworth, of Dante, of all the masters.

Another among the many illustrations that might be brought forward to establish the similarity of the painter's to the poet's thought, not to mention the correspondence between their choice of natural forms in which to clothe their thoughts, is Turner's oft-repeated treatment of "Nor-

ham Castle" (Fig. 68), the subject of one of the plates of the "Liber Studiorum." There the castle stands, a lofty pile of ruinous masonry, towering black against the light of a setting sun. The rays pour through its vacant windows like fire. In the quiet water at the foot of the hill the herd is drinking, and a fisherman draws his net, heedless alike of nature's glory or man's pride. The picture might well bear the title of Wordsworth's sonnet, "Mutability," and not less certainly do its

Fig. 68. Norham Castle. Mezzotint. Turner.

chiaroscuro and forms breathe the thoughts of the poet-painter than the words declare the ideas of the poet-writer:

> "From low to high doth dissolution climb,
> And sink from high to low, along a scale
> Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
> A musical but melancholy chime,
> . . . . . .
> Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
> The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
> . . . . . .

. . . drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, . . .
. . . but could not sustain
. . . . . .
The unimaginable touch of Time."

Let us look at still another illustration, but of quite a different sort, of the resemblance of the painter's view of life and his expression of it, to the poet's, "Dumblain Abbey" (Fig. 65). If ever a picture deserved to be called cheerful, surely this one does. The lovely hill swathed in plumy verdure, the water below mirroring the forest of the upper air, and, over all, the light of a wonderfully luminous sky, give, in the painter's, the painter-graver's terms what Wordsworth's lines express:

" It was a beautiful and silent day
That overspread the countenance of earth,
Then fading with unusual quietness,—
A day as beautiful, as e'er was given
To soothe regret, though deepening what it soothed."

In both these instances the effect is gained by exquisite gradation; by marvelous technique of mezzotint. But as surely as the last two lines introduce the poet's real theme, just so does the presence of a ruined abbey, amid the peace and light of Turner's study, announce the painter's theme. In both cases there is more than an exquisite account of nature for him who studies them; an "open sesame," as it were, through the works of two great men to their great hearts. In Turner's study the hill is crowned by the vacant walls and unroofed nave of the devastated abbey. It speaks of the wrecking power of time, of the fanaticism of beliefs, of the painfully enduring nature of material things. Beneath, upon the margin of the water, women are treading clothes and spreading linen to dry, while one holds an infant in her arms. These bespeak two great sources of human happiness, family life and the capacity for work. Of these women, loving and busy but unmindful of the presence of decay in the midst of a scene of beauteous light, of these the line in the sonnet on "Old Abbeys" might be spoken:

"Untouched by due regret I marked your fall!"

and of the Abbey:

"Once ye were holy, ye are holy still."

The universal and unchanging character of his subject, as over against the chance and change of immediate and specific aspects of it, was always sought and firmly grasped by Turner. No work of his more fully proves this than the "Mer de Glace" (Fig. 4). Picture to yourself an actual scene akin to Turner's glacier. In your picture all the débris of the passing season and the present moment clutters the foreground and conceals the basic formation of the mountains, the thing that remains permanent amidst the flux of surface growth and decay. In Turner's picture he has cleared the ice of much that might have been there, but would have concealed its lines and surfaces of cleavage and breakage under pressure in a mountain gorge. So, too, the precipices; their stratification and permanent forms he has drawn out, as it were, from changeful confusion, and, by means of his art, so put them down in a few lines which express universal and unchanging order. He has looked through his eye and *also with it.* The result is great, because illuminating as well as descriptive, drawing.

So, too, in the "Farne Island" (Frontispiece), a "line engraving" really an etching. Here it is the universal curvatures of waves and the smoothness of surfaces swelling to their crests; the sharp turn of crests and curvatures akin, in nature, to the lines taken by tendrils and fern fronds; in art, to the bounding lines of the best Greek capitals and the best Greek figures discussed in an earlier chapter. In this particular drawing we have perfect abstraction of essentials overlaid with every lovely detail of surface and immediate character; foam and spray; detail wholly compatible with the profound abstraction; a cleaving to the essentials despite details. This print or drawing declares a mind of the Michelangelo type, "voyaging the vast abyss of thought alone," and making recognizable expression of what it finds in the vast abyss of an actual gale-swept sea and wind-torn heaven, wherein the physical strength of man, his wrecked vessel, is told of no less than the intellectual and imaginative strength of man, the artist, Turner. Once more the truth of Samuel Butler's comment, a good portrait is always more a portrait of the painter than the painted, is attested. Facts, few and carefully selected; by these, the meaning of human tragedy and human weakness conveyed amid an elemental majesty. It is as epic as Homer, not more so; as Dante, not less so. It is great art, aiming at a great end and attaining it. Finally, it is the work of a translator-engraver, Willmore; of one of those extraordinary translator-engravers whom Turner gathered about him and so

trained that at last each one became almost his second self for seeing and feeling. The fact of this school of Turner's is one of the miracles of art.

In closing, let us examine the plates of Rouen, etching for the most part, graver-touched in places, taken from the volume called "Rivers of France." The first (Fig. 69) is a distant view, almost maplike with its sweep of Seine and span of bridge; a world-wide view. In the distance the cathedral towers dominant, tremendous, as, in fact, they are. Shut out from your sight those black poplars in the near corner, and learn once for all

Fig. 69. Rouen. Turner.

how the reality of physical distance can be made convincing reality in art. And note, too, the relation of these same tower-like black trees to the black church towers of the distance. For close-knit breadth of interest and repose; for the universals of a magnificent country beneath the unfettered clouds of a vast expanse of sky, this little thing has not been surpassed, while it is of the sort very rarely approached, let alone equalled. In the next (Fig. 70) of the same set we have left the hills, crossed the plains, and reached the opposite bank of the river just under those same towers,

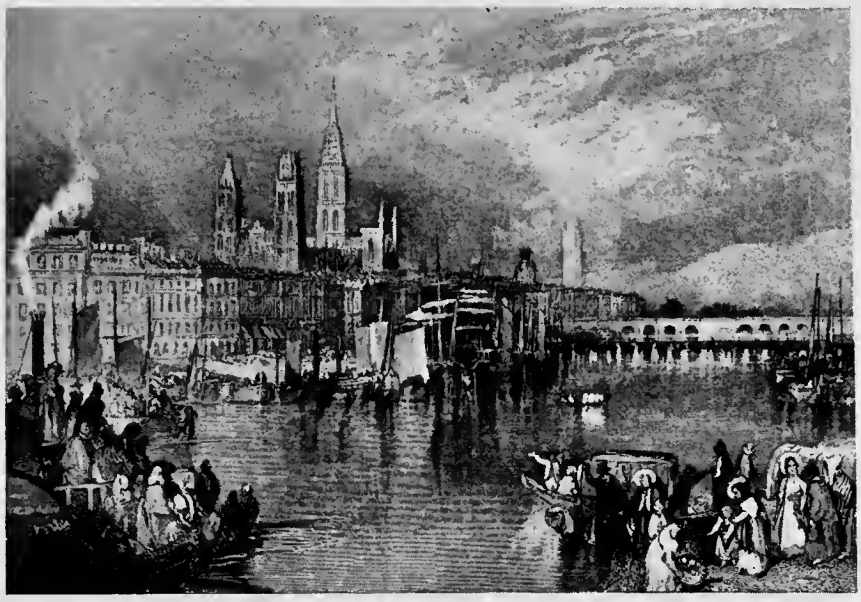


Fig. 70. Rouen. Turner.

more dominant yet, and mightier, as in reality they do become on near approach,—crowds, shipping, lofty houses, but the cathedral over all; breadth and repose just the same, and permanence amid what is passing, the stream of the Seine or the busy life of men. The river runs to the sea and men their "race to death," but the everlasting hills remain, and the cathedral outlives centuries. Finally, we find ourselves in the market place (Fig. 71) under the great front, charged, as Ruskin said, "with wild fancies and dark hosts of imagery, thicker and quainter than the depth of midsummer dream; vaulted gates . . . misty masses of multitudinous pinnacle and diademed tower;"—and here, too, are repose, and calm, and permanence amid the liveliest activities of crowds of men in open market; calm and repose in the great and simple masses of light and shade into which the picture is divided, and within these masses the endless minutiæ of the most ornate of building; in a word, true breadth of artistic treatment. And, dominating all, even the activity of the market crowds, calm and repose, the significance, the sameness, and the variety of human life as it flows through the ages,—true breadth of poetic understanding. Sympathy with present reality and the serious concerns of living; rever-

ent inspiration in the presence of great works, the witnesses of the faith of past generations; power to abstract the heart of his subject and to clothe his abstraction in the loveliest concrete characters; to make a picture which all will recognize and be pleased with; which will speak "rememberable things" to those who have eyes for such things; to glorify man and see his right place in the visible creation, and not less the place of nature; to be able to understand the speech that day unto day uttereth, and the knowledge that night unto night showeth; to do all these

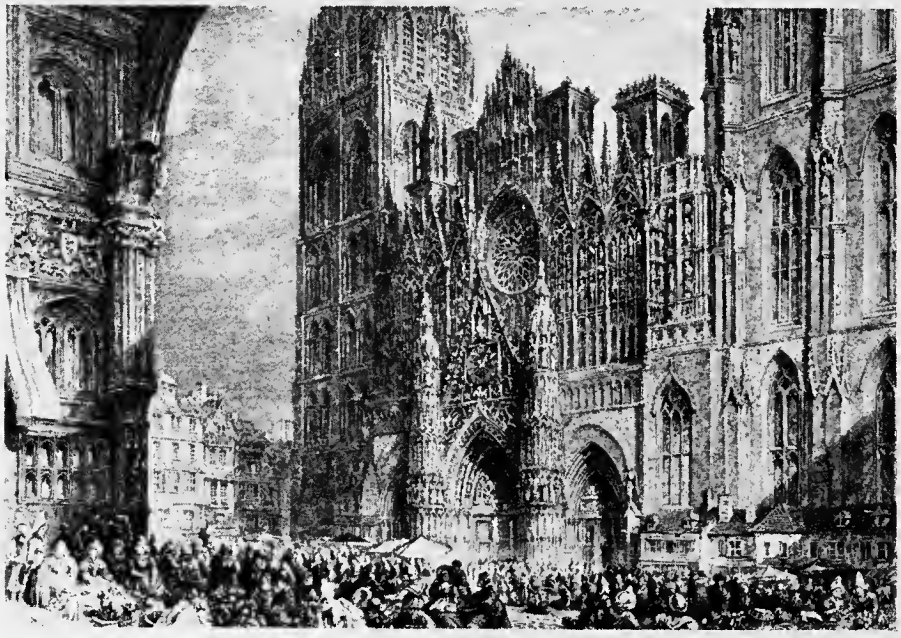


Fig. 71. Rouen. Turner.

things, and more, is the business of great art; to set them forth so that the characters of their conveyance shall be in themselves irresistibly attractive and easily understood, and the solemn joys and endless satisfactions which they offer, free to all men in degree as they are ready to receive them, is art. All this is within the scope of the art of engraving, which is the art of drawing, abler and gentler exponent of which, among its many gentle and able exponents since the middle of the fifteenth century, there has been none than Turner, and only now and then, occasionally, through all that time, his equal.

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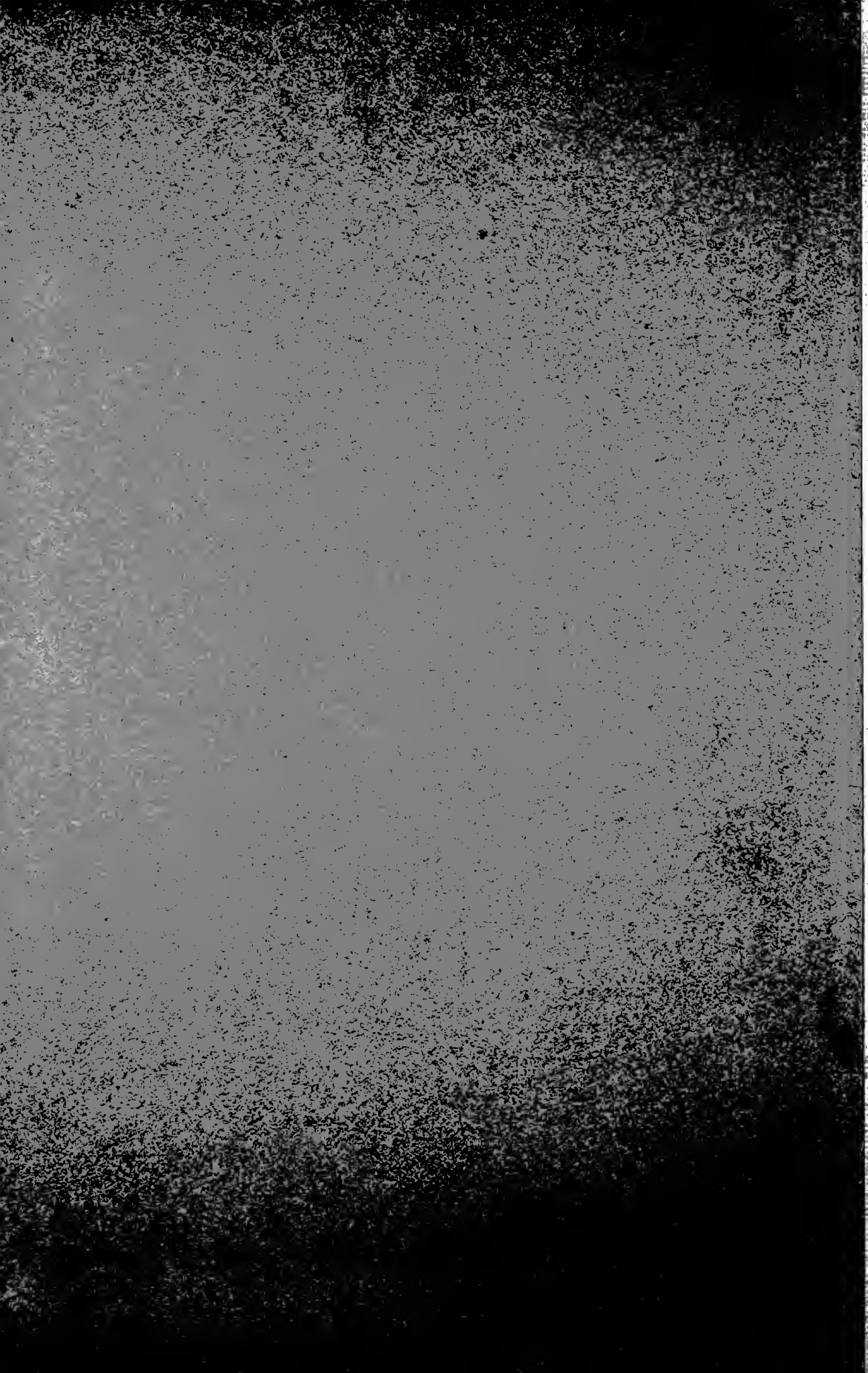
ERRATA

Page 58, line 15, "sleeps" should read "steeps."

Page 59, line 15, "Golding" should read "Goulding."

Page 93, the words "Figure 61" should appear at the end of the footnote.

Page 94, line 20 should read "and giving Italy translations of Greek philosophers," etc.

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